

Bondage of Boundaries and Identity Politics in Postcolonial Africa

The 'Northern Problem' and Ethno-Futures

Edited by: Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Brilliant Mhlana



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Edited by
Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni
and **Brilliant Mhlanga**



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of South Africa**
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Borders, identities, the 'northern problem' and ethno-futures in postcolonial Africa

Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Brilliant Mhlanga

African leaders must now organise a new Berlin conference on their own continent. While the decision to freeze the map of Africa in the 1960s was wise in a sovereignty-obsessed era, Africans must now muster the ingenuity to negotiate new arrangements that reflect their own current realities better. Federations and regional trade blocs must be negotiated and territorial concessions made which reflect better the political, socio-economic, and cultural realities of a vast continent and help avoid future conflicts. After detailed planning, African leaders must proceed to the ancient empire of Ethiopia – the seat of African diplomacy – and reverse the scandalous act of cartographic mischief inflicted on the continent by European statesmen in Berlin over a century ago. African leaders should invite the ancestors to this continental diplomatic feast, so that Nkrumah can hand over the torch of Pan-Africanism to Mbeki, and the curse of Berlin on Africa can be finally lifted (Adebajo 2005: 98).

This book is written at a crucial time in African history. Across the continent there are visible initiatives towards regional integration and ultimately towards the pan-African continental unity that Kwame Nkrumah fought for in the 1960s. But according to Geshiere (2009) this pan-African spirit is gaining new momentum at a time where there is increasing 'return of the local' and 'the perils of belonging' engulfing both Africa and Europe. There is indeed an increasing rise of manufacturing of 'strangers' as causalities of citizenship and autochthonous struggles in Africa. John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff (2009: 1) have also noted that there is 'a lot of ethnic awareness, ethnic assertion, ethnic sentiment, ethno-talk; this despite the fact that it was supposed to wither away with the rise of modernity, with disenchantment, and with the incursion of the market.'

This introductory chapter carries out three tasks. The first task is that of providing a framework on the debates on borders and identities that far transcended the curse of Berlin. The second task is to map out the key contours of African contemporary political situations with a specific focus on what is termed 'the northern problem' and the concomitant issue of 'ethno-futures,'

as themes that have been hostage to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)'s traditional view of linking self-determination to decolonisation and rejection of other internal manifestations and embers of self-determination of dominated and abused minority African peoples. The right to self-determination needs to be reviewed by the African Union (AU) with the goal of liberating it from the old view of linking it only to juridical political independence. The final task is to briefly introduce the subject of each chapter constituting this book.

The AU approach to the question of self-determination must reflect current African realities of a people that have experienced exclusion, marginalisation, and abuses within imposed colonial borders that were used by dictators to peddle ideas of sovereignty while committing a myriad forms of violence, massacres and genocides on those people who can be categorised as 'the toxic Other' of Africa, a word that is borrowed from the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek. The AU cannot afford to perpetuate the blunders of the OAU of failing to decolonise the borders and bow to the Berlin consensus as though it was a commandment from the Almighty who dwells in Europe and America, nor can it afford to bow down to the whims and interests of African dictators as though their views came from the nemesis of the Almighty who dwells in Africa.

The popular argument on the subject of African borders is that they are artificial and arbitrary. This is said to be so because the borders were drawn by European men sitting at the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885 in Germany who did not take into account the ethnographic, demographic, and other local African realities. This popular argument is very useful in so far as it helps us understand that borders were and are by their nature creations and constructions rather than natural order of things. To Herbst (1989: 674–692) borders were always drawn on the basis of their usefulness to those who created them and are the creation of powerful and dominant human elements meant to serve their particular interests. But subaltern groups also create borders informed by language, gender, religion, culture and other differentiating social vectors, while at the same time contesting and adapting to macro-borders imposed on them.

The fact that state borders on the African continent were and are artificial is not unique to Africa, but what is problematic is their arbitrariness which has an impact on issues of nationbuilding and identity politics. Artificiality and arbitrariness of borders must not be conflated into one problem. Arbitrariness, more than artificiality of African boundaries, has had serious consequences for politics of identity, character of conflicts and the project of nationbuilding.

One of the central arguments of this book is that African borders must not be allowed to be bondages and albatrosses that strangle new African assertions of self-determination after decolonisation. We argue that any calls for revision and non-revision of African borders must be based on their value to particular African constituencies and on the basis of changing African realities. A

number of questions have continued to cry out for answers since the time of decolonisation: Are the African borders albatrosses on the neck of the oppressed minorities of Africa? Are they conducive to the maintenance of African peace and security? Are they a colonial problem that needs to be solved? Do they need to be decolonised? What are the implications of re-drawing the map of Africa for peace and security? If they maintain peace and security, whose peace and whose security are being served by maintaining colonial borders?

These are some of the pertinent questions in the debates on borders that have implications for the issues of identities, freedom, power, citizenship and belonging. Borders as political and social creations rather than natural phenomena, must be open to negotiation, re-constructions, re-drawing, contestations, acceptances and total rejections. African leaders have to think carefully on the issue of maintenance or revision of colonially inherited borders. There is also a need to understand whether the current set-up of African borders serve African interests adequately? For instance, the African historian A. Adu Boahen argued that the current borders violated African ethno-cultural, geographical and ecological realities. He concluded that:

Because of the artificiality of these boundaries, each independent African state is made up of a whole host of different ethnocultural groups and nations having different historical traditions and cultures and speaking different languages. One can imagine, then, how stupendous the problem of developing the independent states of Africa into true nation-states is (Boahen 1987: 96).

Boahen conflated artificiality of borders with their arbitrariness. Evidence in the chapters of this book indicates that it is arbitrariness rather than artificiality that is a big problem with African borders. Borders will always be artificial but not always arbitrary. It is this problem that led the OAU (1964) to highlight that borders constituted a 'grave and permanent factor of dissension.' This argument was raised in the distant past by Lord Curzon (1907: 7) who argued that 'frontiers are indeed a razor's edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, of life or death to nations.'

THE MAKING OF VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE BORDERS IN HUMAN HISTORY

Racism, nationalism, ethnicity, tribalism, homophobia, xenophobia, genocides, religious wars, gender-based violence and other phobias and conflicts were all rooted in visible and invisible borders as human inventions and constructions. Their sociology speaks to the attempt to homogenise differences on the one hand and to sustain notions of radical differences on the other. Through homogenising enclosure we witness the creation of human boundaries (borders).

Borders have always existed in visible and non-visible forms but remained as creations of human imagination and agency.

Borders emerged concurrently with the birth of humanity itself. The term 'borders' is better used in a broader sense to refer to a myriad of visible and invisible demarcations that have underpinned the divisions of human population into variegated identities; continents, regions, nations, ethnicities, races, gender, classes, and generations. Borders also demarcate human population ideologically, culturally, politically, psychologically, linguistically, religiously and epistemologically. We note here that there were also borders/boundaries between the sacred and the secular. Ira William Zartman defined boundaries this way:

A boundary is a line indicating where I stop and you begin, separating me from you. Boundaries have to do not only with physical separation but also with social and psychological separation: that is, with identity, indicating who we are and who we are not. Since they divide, they also protect what they have divided, again both physically and psycho-socially (Zartman 2011: 11).

Thus as long as humanity exists, borders would continue to appear as that thorny phenomenon that united and disunited, disjoined and joined, separated and mixed, occidentalised and Orientalised, indigenised and exoticised, Africanised and Europeanised, included and excluded human beings across space and time. The list is endless. Strassoldo also emphasised the ambiguous character of spatial borders:

Spatial boundaries have ambiguous features: they divide and unite, bind the interior and link it with the exterior, are barriers and junctions, walls and doors, organs of defence and attack, and so on. Frontier areas (borderlands) can be managed so as to maximize any of these functions. They can be militarized, as bulwarks against neighbours, or made into areas of peaceful interchange (Strassoldo 1989: 393).

The logic of borders lay deep in historical and discursive processes of formation of identities mediated by human competition over space and resources. Borders were part and parcel of what the French theorist Michel Foucault described as the construction and dissimulation of reality as human actions where power was always at play either being accepted, resisted, rejected, contested or tolerated (Foucault 1982).

To Martin Heidegger (1971: 152), 'a boundary is not that at which something stops but [...] that at which something begins its presencing.' It is a form of *horismos* (horison) and a space in which room is granted and disjoined by virtue of one's location through the creation of bridges as the semiology of

presencing. The linkage between borders and identities is well articulated by Craig Calhoun who argued that:

We know no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinction between self and other, we and they, are not made [...] self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others (Calhoun 1994: 7).

Aletta J. Norval argued that at the centre of identity formation in general were 'political frontiers.' She defined political frontiers as:

[T]hose mechanisms through which social division is instituted, and 'insiders' distinguished from 'outsiders;' it defines opposition; it dissimulates social division; it makes it seem that the institution of social division is not itself a social fact (Norval 1996: 4–5).

Present-day continents and their current reduction into homes of various named identities were rooted in Western modernity, a product of deliberate actions of Westerners and their ideologies of coloniality of power. The foundational myths of social classification of human population and demarcations were also rooted in Charles Darwin's social evolutionism, thus giving rise to the discourse of 'genetic determinism' as its epistemological locus. The concept of 'genetic determinism' gave impetus to the deployment of 'racism and social Darwinism', asserts van den Berghe (1981: 02).

The Western perspective of the world beyond Europe and America bred Eurocentrism and racial ethnocentrism as ideologies of border-making, informing such processes as cartography and map-making that placed the African continent below Europe and America. Samir Amin defined Eurocentrism as a world view fabricated by domination of Western capitalism, that claimed that European cultures reflected the unique centre of the world and progressive manifestation of the metaphysical order of history (Amin 2009).

Amin further argued that Eurocentrism was nothing but an ideological distortion and an incredible mythology as well as a historical moral travesty based on appropriation of Greek rationality and Christianity to create, legitimise and justify the placing of the white race at the top end of the human social classification as well as trying to routinise and naturalise the exploitative capitalist social order founded on the conquest and domination of the non-Western World (Amin 2009: 160-175).

In this scheme of things, those people who were called Europeans deployed the benefits of the Renaissance, Enlightenment, Western modernity and Industrial Revolution to appropriate the course of human history and defined it as

proceeding from the state of nature as the point of departure for the universal human story of progress and culminating in Western civilisation according to Quijano (2000: 551). In this appropriated course of history, the Western world became the centre of the world. Through mapping, colonisation and naming, the coloniser gave people singular identities such as; Africans, Indians and Latinos. In the second place, those peoples who were enslaved and were taken out of their homes bearing various ethnic names such as Ashanti, Yoruba and others were re-named as Negroes or blacks to distinguish them from Europeans, who assumed the identity of masters within this inhumane commerce, emphasises Quijano (2000: 551-552).

The African continent and African people were also products of Western racial social engineering that culminated in the infamous Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884-5 that authorised the scramble and legitimised the partition of the continent into European colonies. On the other hand, the processes of classifying human beings according to race took the form of consistent 'inferiorisation' of non-white races and the reconstruction of Western identities as white, European and American that was predicated on a process of 'superiorisation' of white races. This is how Anibal Quijano summarised the processes:

The first resultant from the history of colonial power had, in terms of colonial perception, two decisive implications. The first is obvious: peoples were dispossessed of their own and singular historical identities. The second is perhaps less obvious: their new racial identity, colonial and negative, involved the plundering of their places in the history of the cultural production of humanity. From then on, there were inferior races, capable only of producing inferior cultures. The new identity also involved their relocation in the historical time constituted with America first and with Europe later: from then on they were the past [...]. America was the first modern and global geocultural identity. Europe was the second and was constituted as a consequence of America, not the inverse. The constitution of Europe as a new historic entity/identity was made possible, in the first place, through the free labour of American Indians, blacks, and mestizos [...]. It was on this foundation that a region was configured as the site of control of the Atlantic routes, which became in turn, and for this very reason, the decisive routes of world market [...]. So Europe and America mutually produced themselves as the historical and the first two new geocultural identities of the modern world (Quijano 2000: 522).

Quijano says three main discursive processes were at play during the creation of Eurocentrism: articulation of human differences into dualisms of capital/pre-capital, Europe/non-Europe, primitive/civilised, traditional/modern underpinned by a linear conception of human history from state of nature to European society; the naturalisation of the cultural differences between human

groups by means of their codification with the idea of race; and the distorted-temporal relocation of all those differences by pushing those categorised as non-Europeans into the past (Quijano 2000: 552-553).

Nelson Maldonado-Torres wrote about the myth of continents as artificial creations of Western modernity. This is how he put it:

In this sense it is possible to say that the 'myth of continents' is part of a larger racial myth in modernity formed in relation to imperial enterprises, in which continents denote not only space but also a well ordered hierarchy of customs, habits and potentials that are said to inhere in the people who live in them. Spaces thus become gendered and coloured, just as the forms of rationality, tastes, and capabilities of the peoples who occupy them (Maldonado-Torres 2006: 3).

Africa as a continent emerged from this imperial scheme of things and African identities continued to be reconstructed since that time into barbarians, primitives, natives, blacks, Negroes, Bantu, Africans and other typologies across history and space. The name Africa was an external label. Its roots were traceable to the Roman times where it was used with specific reference to North Africa before it was extended to the whole continent at the end of the first century before the current era.

Paul Tiyambe Zeleza (2006: 15) noted that the cartographic application of the name Africa was both gradual and contradictory as the idea of Africa became divorced from its original North African coding to be used with specific reference to Sub-Saharan Africa. Gayatri Spivak had this to say about the origins of the name Africa:

Africa, a Roman name for what the Greeks called 'Libya,' itself perhaps a latinization of the name of the Berber tribe Aourigha (perhaps pronounced 'Afarika'), is a metonym that points to a greater indeterminacy: the mysteriousness of the space upon which we are born. *Africa* is only a time-bound naming; like all proper names it is a mark with an arbitrary connection to its referent, a catachresis. The earth as temporary dwelling has no foundational name (Spivak 1991: 170).

Valentin Y. Mudimbe provided the most detailed and sophisticated analysis of the idea and invention of Africa including identification of such processes as voyages of exploration, cartography, mapping, Christianisation and interventions of colonial anthropologists in the making and representation of African identities (Mudimbe 1988: 44, 1994).

The different chapters in this book depict variegated situations across the African continent and offer detailed dynamics of various case studies where the problem of arbitrary borders is provoking conflicts. In all this, questions of ethnicity, nationalism and its narration as well as imperatives of 'insider versus

outsider' constitute the outlets around which postcolonial conflicts crystallise and intensify. Boone (2003:2) says, certainly, the 'importation of the administrative ideologies and structures from colonial metropolises,' further complicated the postcolonial African problems.

This argument is amplified by Basil Davidson (1992: 10) who observed that Africa's crisis is deeply embedded in the institutions inherited at independence. Davidson elaborated that nationalism's attempt to forge unitary 'nation-statism' became a farce because both the nation and the state were not emerging from African historical realities. He concluded that:

The 50 or so states of the colonial partition, each formed and governed as though their peoples possessed no history of their own, became fifty or so nation-states formed and governed on European models, chiefly the models of Britain and France. Liberation thus produced its own denial. Liberation led to alienation (Davidson 1992: 10).

In response to the challenge of borders two recent events reveal the importance and need for new studies that deal with the theme of borders and identities. The first is the launch of the AU Border Programme in 2006. The AU Border Programme sought to actively promote local-border cooperation initiatives as a tool for accelerating regional integration processes (AU Border Programme 2007). The second is the addition of Southern Sudan as an independent, 54th African member state of the AU following a referendum that took place in early January 2011. The setting up of a new continental AU Border Programme indicated that the issue of borders, in particularly their arbitrariness was far from resolution in Africa.

The route chosen to resolve the Southern Sudan problem to some extent demonstrated the rising confidence of Africans and their preparedness to transcend the old principles of the OAU that emphasised the inviolability of colonially-inherited African borders, thus spurring a number of ethnic nationalities into imagining their own separate states. The birth of Southern Sudan as a sovereign state is a groundbreaking event in African postcolonial history in the sense that for the first time on the African soil a colonial boundary was broken to form a new state. The other example often cited is that of Eritrean secession from Ethiopia. But Eritrea had existed before as an independent entity before it was brought under Ethiopian power – according to Abbink (1998; 2003).

The secession of Southern Sudan from Khartoum this time round has been embraced by the AU as a signatory to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) binding signatories to respect the right to self-determination of the Southern Sudanese following their democratic vote in a referendum. It is clear that through this case, secession has become part of a solution to the long-standing

conflict and violence that has claimed lives of many people (International Crisis Group 2010). The case study of Southern Sudan is examined in detail in this book including its potential to set in motion insurrectionist and separatist tendencies in other parts of the African continent. Voices of dissent calling for new separate states across Africa have now become louder thereby prompting us to conclude that in Africa the era of violence is not yet over.

This book reveals the enduring problem of ethnic-based problems that have bedevilled postcolonial Africa as linked to the arbitrariness of African boundaries. Our starting point however is that discussions of ethnicity in most African states were and still are criminalised as 'tribalism' and this attitude has compromised any deeper scientific understanding of this phenomenon (Mhlanga 2010). This criminalisation often finds common acceptance despite the fact that ethnicity continues to manifest itself in most public spaces. As Maybury-Lewis trenchantly puts it:

[E]thnicity has a will-o'-wisp quality that makes it extremely hard to analyse and not much easier to discuss. Everyone knows that it is a kind of fellow-feeling that binds people together and makes them feel distinct from others, yet it is difficult to say precisely what kind of feeling it is and why and when people will be strongly affected by it. Some people under some circumstances are willing to die and certainly to kill on behalf of their ethnic group [...]. So what is ethnicity [...]?

(Maybury-Lewis, 1997: 59)

This book offers a refreshing perspective on how the setting up of African boundaries impinged on the postcolonial African national project together with shaping and influencing the character of 'territorial nationalism' whose negation can now be seen through ethnic violence, irredentism and secessionism reverberating across the African continent.

Leading anthropologist John Comaroff (1997) in articulating his five trajectories on ethnicity argued that it, as a form of identity, can be perpetuated by factors that may not have originated it. Viewed from this perspective, it becomes clear how ethnicity has a major role to play within the nationalist project in Africa; as a resource for conjuring belonging to political community, identity, citizenship and the narration of the nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983).

Ethnicity in postcolonial Africa has become one of the most utilised ideological resources harnessed by political elites as well as ordinary people to include and exclude each other from benefiting from resources and enjoyment of citizenship rights (Bhabha 1990 and Young 1976, 1997). The rise of neoliberalist thinking and its premise on celebrations of difference, tolerance of difference and multiculturalism, has indirectly boosted the rise of ethnic-consciousness as part of assertion of rights to culture and identity by some of those peoples

who experienced the violent processes of homogenisation of identities. This rise in ethnic consciousness provoked John and Jean Comaroff (2009: 8) to wonder whether the African world was not progressing towards 'ethno-futures' rather than towards pan-Africanism.

Conversely, there are also clear initiatives towards building strong pan-African institutions as part of a drive to realise the goal of African Renaissance. Examples included the transformation of the OAU to AU, the establishment of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the adoption of New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). These were clear strides made towards Africa's claim of the twenty-first century as the African century. The challenge is how can the ideas of African Renaissance and pan-Africanism be realised on a continent where there are clear signs of resurgences of various narrow nationalisms? How can the dream of Africa's claim of the twenty-first century be realised where the vicissitudes of the 'return of the local' are informed by the rise of the ethno-focused futures and are contending with the drive by some African leaders for a 'united states' of Africa – underpinned by pan-Africanism?

The crisis of the pan-African project is exacerbated by the exit from the political stage of Thabo Mbeki and Olusegun Obasanjo who were actively involved in driving the pan-African project. Their exit from the political scene has cast doubts over the future of the pan-African route. Worse still, the persistence of the cleavages between gradualists and those like the late Colonel Gaddafi of Libya who wanted the United States of Africa to be declared, indicated the unpreparedness of African leaders to move out of a political timidity characteristic of the OAU period to fully embrace the ideals of radical pan-Africanism, predicted on realisation of an AU government.

By 2007 at the Accra Conference of the AU in Ghana, it emerged that African leaders had not yet transcended the old Casablanca-Brazzaville-Monrovia divide of the 1960s that disappointed Kwame Nkrumah, who wanted a United States of Africa declared then. This time the Nkrumah position was taken by late Colonel Gaddafi who wanted the AU to declare a United States of Africa immediately.

Again there emerged an oppositional voice, including that of Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, that still favoured a gradualist approach towards the building of a United States of Africa (Mbeki 1998, 2002). One wonders whether this so-called cautionary approach was not in reality a manifestation of African timidity camouflaged as pragmatism. An added complexity was a somehow realist position but one which acknowledged the Westphalian 'curse' and worshipped the 'old ghost' of Berlin that opposed any radical potential to alter the post-colonial spatial order inherited from colonialism.

This book is not the first to deal with the intractable and complex issue of borders and ethnic identities. Anthony Ijaola Asiwaju of Nigeria (1976,

1985, 2003; Nugent and Asiwaju 1996) pioneered the scholarly studies of the problems rooted in the partition of Africa and the boundary issues. Asiwaju dedicated his entire academic life towards understanding this theme. Other younger scholars such as Adekeye Adebajo (2010) have also interrogated the impact of the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884 to 1885 on African problems of identity, disunity and conflicts.

But before Asiwaju published his first major book in 1976, the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, now the Nordic Africa Institute, based at Uppsala in Sweden organised a Conference on 'African Boundary Problems' in May 1968. Widstrand states that this was dubbed 'the first truly international conference on African boundaries since the Berlin Treaty Conference in 1884 to 1885' (Widstrand 1969: 8).

The common point of departure for most of the existing studies on borders is the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885 which galvanised the scramble and partition of the African continent. For instance, Ali Mazrui (2010: xii) argued that the 'partition of the African continent unleashed unprecedented changes in African societies: political, economic, cultural, and psychological.' He added that 'the seeds of the postcolonial wars themselves lie in the sociological mess that the post-Berlin partition created in Africa by destroying ancient boundaries of identity and old methods of conflict resolution without creating effective substitutes in their place' (Mazrui 2010: xiii). Also in view of this challenge to the postcolony and the continuing carnage in Africa, Mazrui launches a plea in search of substantive answers:

Is the colonial order being washed away with buckets of blood? Or are we witnessing the agonizing birth pangs of a genuinely postcolonial order? Is the blood in fact spilling in the maternity ward of history as a new Africa is trying to breathe? Until we know whether this is the birth of a truly decolonized Africa, we cannot celebrate. In any case, who can celebrate in the midst of all this blood and carnage? (Ali Mazrui 1995: 28)

The views presented in this book are refreshing, radically critical and spoiling for an unthinking of certain paradigms within the African national project and seeking to take a serious academic look at those cases of conflict often dismissed and criminalised as manifestations of tribalism. Immanuel Wallerstein's (2001) argument that we must 'unthink' certain universalised nineteenth century paradigms rather than always rethinking them, becomes useful here. This form of intellectual and academic repositioning, when assessed using the broad spectacles of political topographies of the African state as rooted in Westphalian thought, colonial impositions and African nationalist thought, the agenda of unthinking what the nationalists and colonialists imposed on Africa as paradigmatic stencils, becomes very persuasive and attractive. Unthinking

some concepts is revolutionary and radical, whereas rethinking concepts is often conservative, reactionary and reformist.

In unthinking some concepts, as shown in this book, different scholars are mounting a form of intellectual rebellion from conservative thinking about African borders. The chapters raise a number of difficult questions: Is nationalism that runs roughshod the realities of regionalism and ethnicity correct? Was colonialism that accepted the realities of race and ethnicity actually far from the mark? Is it not a fact that people of common language and common culture wish to belong together, feel sympathy for one another, favour each other and so forth?

In seeking to understand this radical course of action we argue that there are two problems with taking the Berlin Conference as a departure point for any understanding of contemporary problems of conflict, fragmented ethnic identities and nationbuilding. The first is that of missing the bigger picture of the role of Eurocentrism rooted in Western modernity and its responsibility for both the visible and invisible boundaries it authorised and enabled since the early colonial encounters. The Berlin Conference was just one of the numerous European initiatives that not only authorised the partition of Africa, but also classified the world population according to race and other vectors.

The second problem is that of an overconcentration on the Berlin Conference as the cardinal event that sowed the original sins and a 'curse' on Africa, often absolving African leaders of their responsibility in some of the conflicts bedevilling the African continent. Some of the questions to begin with include, why did the founding fathers of postcolonial African states become possessive about colonial borders to the extent of fighting against those people who challenged authenticity of these borders? Why did the founding fathers choose to selectively embark on the radical project of decolonisation by dealing with cosmetic issues such as name changes to government buildings while refusing to deconstruct colonial boundaries? Was this act alone not tantamount to an analogy of demanding that the colonial administrator should remove his shoes in order for the founding fathers to wear them? The fact that African borders have often generated conflicts within them rather than across them brings in the responsibility of the African leaders and their styles of governance as contributory factors to some of the conflicts that have appeared in the form of identity-based conflagrations.

AFRICA AND THE BONDAGE OF BOUNDARIES

Here we engage with Ali A. Mazrui (1994: 60-63)'s rather prophetic diagnosis of the problems of borders and his somewhat problematic futuristic propositions, some of which have been vindicated by recent African events and others have earned him a bad name as a reactionary African scholar propagating rec-

olonisation of Africa. In our engagement with Mazrui we approve some of his interventions and challenge others. Mazrui posed the pertinent question: How many of the state boundaries of present-day Africa will remain intact in 100 years? Basing his propositions on what had happened to the Horn of Africa, Mazrui identified what he termed 'three post-colonial taboos' that had been broken (Mazrui 1994: 60). The first taboo to be broken was that of 'recolonisation' in the form of the return of United Nations (UN)'s temporary tutelage over Somalia in the 1990s reminiscent of its trusteeship that it exercised over former Belgian Congo in the 1960s and South West Africa until it became independent Namibia in 1990.

According to Mazrui, this UN action indicates conceivability of external 'recolonisation' of failing states under the banner of humanitarian intervention as a future policy option in Africa (Mazrui 1994: 60). This taboo can be seen through the recently reconfigured lenses informing the invasion of Libya following the UN Resolution 1973. But Mazrui added that the recolonisation will take the form of benevolent trusteeship system coming from within the African continent itself.

Perhaps, the AU and Southern African Development Community (SADC) mandating South Africa to mediate in Zimbabwe and monitor the country's recovery from crisis to normalcy vindicates Mazrui's proposition about benevolent trusteeship exercised by Africans over other Africans. In this case trusteeship would be part of 'African solutions to African problems', but with external sources of funding. What about American attempts to use Ethiopian military forces to deal with the Somali problem in recent years? Can this be read as a case of attempts to revive imperial Ethiopia through military interventions in neighbouring states to restore order rather than to annex them?

The second taboo to be broken was that of officially sanctioned secession and the example of this trend was Eritrea's achievement of independence after many years of waging a war of secession against the Ethiopian government. Mazrui (1994: 60) proposed that in future, the existing African state systems would change in two directions: first will be ethnic self-determination following the example of Eritrea. The recent case of Southern Sudan vindicates Mazrui's prediction on this score. The second would be regional integration taking the form of larger political communities and economic unions. Indeed the question of regional integration taking the form of Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), SADC and others as well as the push for a United States of Africa were among the topical aspects of the African agenda in this century.

The third taboo that was broken was that of retribalisation of Africa. According to Mazrui (1994: 60) this was seen in Ethiopia when it adopted a unique ethnic federal constitutional order that recognised ethnic autonomy to a very large extent. Based on these three taboos that were being broken, Mazrui (1994: 61) argued that:

Now post-colonial Africa is being forced to take a fresh look at many of the sacred cows and taboos of the 1960s. Do the credentials of the tribe need to be re-examined, the legitimacy of tribalism be reviewed? Federalism was once taboo almost everywhere outside Nigeria [...] Is that blind post-colonial enthusiasm for the unitary state all over Africa now demanding another look? Distrust of pluralism was another widespread tendency of post-colonial African ideologies. One-party states were a consequence of that; the 1990s have now witnessed revulsion and rebellion against the one-party system [...] The other has been ethnicity and politicized tribal identity. A question persists as to whether re-democratization and re-tribalisation cancel each other out (Mazrui 1994: 61).

The significance of Mazrui's 1994 interventions on the debate on 'bondage of boundaries' was to indicate the shifting political landscape and changing nature of African politics that had direct implications for both visible and invisible boundaries. Africans as both products and victims of exogenously and endogenously imposed borders have begun to question the sacredness of some of the borders imposed on them by those insensitive white men who gathered in Berlin in 1884 to 1885 and those African men who gathered in Addis Ababa in 1963 and Cairo in 1964.

It remains paradoxical that African leaders who were said to be opposed to colonialism would refuse to decolonise the colonially determined borders that were drawn without any serious consideration of and sensitivity to ethnographic and existential African realities. What is even more paradoxical is the present-day strong reluctance by African leaders to let go of the 'bondage of boundaries' and fully embrace the pan-African continental integration that visionaries like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Ahmed Sékou Touré of Guinea and others preached soon after their countries achieved political independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

At another level, there are ongoing conflicts within countries like Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Northern Uganda, Cote d'Ivoire and many other parts of the continent that were fuelled by both visible and invisible borders. Mazrui made another bold intervention comparing and contrasting the motivations behind those conflicts that involved blacks against whites and blacks against blacks. His take is that:

While black against white in Africa is a clash over resources, black against black is more often a clash of identities. The thesis here is that racial conflicts in Africa are ultimately economic, whereas tribal wars are ultimately cultural. White folks and black folks fight about who owns what. Black folks and black folks fight about who is who. Apartheid in South Africa was ultimately an economic war. But Hutu against Tutsi is a cultural conflict. The demarcation of property may be less deadly than the clash of identities (Mazrui 2010: xiv).

What must be added is that behind what appeared as cultural conflicts there were hidden economic and political factors. As such the Hutu-Tutsi conflict was not only cultural but there were many other factors that caused the genocide, including the role of Belgian colonialism and struggles over meagre economic resources (see Mamdani 2001). Thus, cultural, racial, economic and other factors that cause human conflicts must be read collectively as important vectors in shaping borders of differences that have taken the form of what we have termed the 'northern problem' and its concomitant end product known as the 'toxic other.' It is important to explain these two concepts; the 'northern problem' and the 'toxic other.'

THE 'NORTHERN PROBLEM' IN AFRICA

There is no postcolonial African state without its own 'northern problem.' The term 'northern problem' is used in this book in a metaphoric sense to refer to the existence of an enclosed and disgruntled group claiming particular common historical roots, particular myths of foundation, particular symbols and signs, particular common language(s), particular origins and particular identities that are different from the dominant 'ethnie' around which postcolonial nation-states were constructed and imagined. It was Anthony D. Smith (1986; 1995; 1999; 2000) well known for his ethno-symbolist theories of the nation who argued that nations crystallised around dominant 'ethnies', meaning the numerically superior ethnic groups that in postcolonial Africa also produced political leaders.

The 'northern problem' does not imply a geographical place but a state of being a particular national identity that considers itself deserving some degree of or total right to self-determination. The term 'northern problem' encapsulates the feelings of those minority groups which were historically disadvantaged by the random slicing and drawing of African borders by colonialists and later by the OAU decision on the inviolability of colonial boundaries. It does not necessarily mean or imply that those forms of disenchantment and their fissures were found only in the northern parts of any African postcolonial nation-state.

The Katanga Secession of 11 July 1960 from the Congo and Biafra War of 1967 to 1970 in Nigeria were the earliest open manifestations of the 'northern problem.' Then the successful secession of Eritrea and Southern Sudan are the latest cases of its continued and increased resonance. Some scholars simply referred to it as the national question characterised by throwing the vitality of the state 'into question across much of the continent, as armed factions carved out their own territorial niches' (Nugent 2004: 434). The 'northern problem' often manifested itself in terms of questioning the inviolability of colonially crafted boundaries and projections of desires to form a new self-determining state.

Current political trends in Africa show that the number of ethnic nationalities imagining their own separate states has multiplied. Examples of these groups, just to mention a few, include; the Southern Nigeria (Ogoniland the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People), ongoing struggles in the Niger Delta (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta), Caprivians in Namibia (United Democratic Party with its politics of secession), the Barotse people of who want the revival of their monarchy in Zambia, the Ndebele and the calls for the revival of the Mthwakazi state in Zimbabwe, the Kalanga of Botswana, Zulu nationalism and its discontents in South Africa, the Ngoni of Malawi, the Nanumbas and Konkumbas in Ghana, the Zanzibarians (Pemba) in Tanzania, Cabinda in Angola, Front for the Liberation of the State of Cabinda (FLEC), Casamance in Senegal, Southern Cameroon in Cameroon, Northern Somaliland, Oromo in Ethiopia, Northern Uganda, and the case of Polisario of Western Sahara in Morocco. These case studies from Africa as examples of the embers and grumbings of the 'northern problem' are further elaborated in the different chapters of this book.

The 'northern problem' often exists in the form of an uneasy 'nation within a nation.' At another level, the dominant ethnies often consider themselves to be the only authentic subjects of the nation and in the process reconstructing minorities as the 'toxic other' (as an unwanted group that must not claim any rights and privileges but must accept domination in employment, in politics, in culture, language and in every aspect of human life). In his *Partitioned Africans* (1985: 256–258), Asiwaju added what he termed 'partitioned culture areas: a checklist' and listed more than 300 'partitioned ethnic groups' across the 103 borders separating Africans which in this book we call the 'toxic other.' Examples include Somalis who were divided into those in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, Kalanga cut into those in Zimbabwe and those in Botswana, Herero and Basarwa (so-called Bushmen) bifurcated into those in Namibia and Botswana and many others.

The bulk of the blame lies squarely with the founding nationalist figures of Africa. Nationalists did not envisage a moment of resurrection of strong ethnic-consciousness; instead they were quick to deplore and label it as retrogressive but would hastily embrace it when it matters. This has continued to be Africa's bane. The founding nationalist leaders expected ethnic identities to die if the postcolonial nations had to live. What is ironic about the fate of the 'toxic other' who include minorities that are struggling for self determination, is that the state and the dominant ethnies while marginalising, excluding, suppressing and even killing minorities, are also opposed to the irredentist, secessionist tendencies and any other options such as federalism and decentralisation that are suggested by the 'toxic Other' as exit strategies and tactics to alleviate their situation of domination. The toxicity of those people who constitute the 'northern problem' has always manifested itself through their being called names such as

'cockroaches' with specific reference to the Tutsi in Rwanda, 'chaff' or 'insects' (nhunzvatonzva) with specific reference to the Ndebele in Zimbabwe and 'makwerekwere' with reference to foreigners in South Africa and Botswana. These are terms used to deny the humanity of these people before violence, massacre and genocide is meted on them (Mamdani 2001; Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace & Legal Resources Foundation 1997; Nyamnjoh 2006 and Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009).

But why is it important now to focus on the 'northern problem' and the 'toxic Other' in Africa? While Africa has finally realised decolonisation and juridical freedom, it is increasingly being confronted with new internal claims for self-determination. This challenge emanates from the unresolved 'northern problem' and the existence of the 'toxic Other' who were claiming the right of self-determination within postcolonial independent states to freely choose their political institutions, including the right to breakaway to form new states or to join other existing states (Idowu 2008: 45).

The current challenge as put forward by A. A. Idowu (2008: 47) 'is whether there is no concept of self-determination outside de-colonisation. In other words, is it only the peoples of non-self-governing territories who are entitled to self-determination or are peoples in independent states also entitled to exercise the right?' The OAU ruled out a right of self determination by a minority resident within an independent African state. But throughout the existence of the OAU, the case of Western Sahara haunted and troubled the founding fathers of African postcolonial states who religiously stuck with the idea of inviolability and sanctity of colonial borders (Thomas 1993: 10).

At the time of writing this book a new school of thought rooted in human rights discourses, of course, under the tutelage of UN through its different legal instruments had emerged. This new school contended that self-determination was a dynamic and versatile principle which was equally applicable to all peoples regardless of whether they belonged to a non-self-governing territory or a fully independent state (Thomas 1993:15). As Dan Jacobs (1987: 07) observed in his narrative of the inexplicable brutality, murder and genocide of the Igbo people by the Nigerian government sectioned by Britain and America in the 1967/8 Biafra war, that the UN legal instruments that seemed to apply only to states in Europe and North America should have been allowed to apply in the case of Nigeria. This he presents as a thesis that refutes the cardinal positioning of the 'inviolability of sovereign authority commonly designated as 'non-interference in internal affairs of another sovereign state', even when it is clear that the state is brutalising those considered to be the 'toxic Other.'

But John Dugard (1993: 173) who has no sympathies with the right to secession provided a very stringent exception to the rule including that the people of the seceding territory should constitute a distinct people, with regard to their language, culture and historical experience; the seceding people must have a

clear historical claim to the territory in question; the territory occupied by the secessionist group must have come under the control of the existing state by some unjustifiable historical event such as annexation; the will of the people of the territory must be expressed by means of a referendum or election and demonstrate very clearly support for secession; and finally the human rights of the seceding people must have been seriously violated including denial of proper participation in the government of the state from which they wish to secede.

What happened to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the 1990s in terms of their radical breaking-up into various independent states set a precedent that Africa cannot ignore. Franck Thomas (1993) who is supportive of the right to secede draws ammunition from the Covenants on Political and Civil Rights and on Social-Economic Rights as well as the Helsinki Accord of 1975, both of which emphasised the right to self-determination for all peoples across the world. But the right of secession is not yet fully accepted as a human right despite advances in human rights laws which have far-reaching consequences on the scope and status of self-determination. But at the same time article 20 of the African Charter of Human and People's Rights stipulated that: all peoples shall have the right to existence – they shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination. The current book, dealing with some of the most intractable cases of identity-based conflicts and claims for secession helps in shedding light on the complexities of the rights to secession in Africa.

SCOPE AND ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

The book is broadly organised into *Part 1: Space, Boundaries and Contours of the 'Northern Problem'; Part 2: Autochthons, Minorities and Politics of Secession; Part 3: Migration, Conflict, Citizenship and Violence; and Part 4: Territorial Nationalism, Regionalism and Pan-Africanism* – which capture and interrogate various aspects of borders, identities, the 'northern problem' and the 'toxic Other' in postcolonial Africa from different vantage points.

Kudzai Matereke's chapter opens the first section, providing refreshing new thinking on discourses of space and spatiality as they impinged on borders, African identity politics and separatism. His intervention is from a unique philosophical analysis and is focused on intersections of territory, politics and identities buttressed by a 'spatial turn' in humanities and social sciences which brought together interdisciplinary insights from geography, philosophy, space, power and knowledge to illuminate the making of boundaries and identities. Issues of imagination of space and colonial cartographical interventions that ignored pre-colonial cultural and historical realities are highlighted. The chapter brings out the bigger picture of human spatial thinking drawing from philosophical mediations and postmodernist thought to reflect on creation

of colonial states. The idea of the margins is effectively used to explicate the 'northern problem' in African experience and history.

The following chapter by Eric George and Nazar Hilal deals with the interface among identity, security and conflict in postcolonial Africa. George and Hilal argue that the colonialists and postcolonial leaders have left the challenge of fragmentation of African identities which in turn raise complex security issues rooted in colonially imposed boundaries that were informed by Westphalian order unresolved. George and Hilal emphasise the interrogation of dynamics of local human insecurities and identity politics at the level of the 'everyday' life of Africans in an attempt to transcend those academic interventions pitched at the state-centric level which have failed to resolve boundary-related and identity-based conflicts. They call for investment in conflict resolution efforts that seriously take into account the dynamics of conflicts and insecurities afflicting human beings at community level to reinforce local solutions.

Redie Bereketeab's chapter deals with the important issues of interconnectedness of intra-state, inter-state and international dimensions of conflict in the volatile region of Horn of Africa. This chapter also delves into processes of state-building and conflict, and how these interface with the discourses and realities of global war on terror in the Horn of Africa. This region is comprised of Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti and it 'has been the most conflict-ridden region in the continent for the last fifty years or so.' In the process even minor and less known conflicts like those rocking Djibouti are highlighted including how the phenomenon of weak and collapsed states has made it possible for all sorts of conflicts to ravage the Horn of Africa with ripple effects on the neighbouring states of Eastern Africa.

Finex Ndhlovu's chapter, which closes the first section of the book, deals with the 'burden of national languages and the bondage of linguistic boundaries' in postcolonial Africa. Ndhlovu focuses on how national languages were regularly deployed in the construction of homogenised and territorialised national identities as 'borders' that produced the 'northern problem' and the 'toxic Other' on which the seeds of ethno-futures germinated. He draws empirical evidence from the case study of Zimbabwe 'where Shona linguistic and cultural norms dominate with those of the Ndebele vying as a little brother, while other ethnolinguistic polities remain imprisoned in boundaries of these politically imposed national identity versions.'

Part 2 opens with a nuanced discussion by Kwesi Aning and Naila Salihu of identity politics and how it impinged on political stability in Cote d'Ivoire and Togo recently. Cote d'Ivoire and Togo are treated together because 'Both countries have diverse ethno-religious groups or societies that coexist in the modern state' and since the end of French colonialism, 'successive leaders in both countries have pursued varied policies with mixed outcomes relating to political stability and social cohesion.' Aning and Salihu, therefore, examine the crisis of

colonial boundaries, historical journey of Cote d'Ivoire into crisis and how the leaders of both countries have tried to deal with the 'northern problem.'

In 'Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni Struggle and the Aesthetics of Spectacle,' Austin Tam-George interrogates the 'burdens and anxieties of minority citizenship in a multi-ethnic state' of Nigeria and which resulted in the death of the well-known novelist Saro-Wiwa by hanging and other Ogoni activists. Tam-George argues that 'Saro-Wiwa's Ogoni are an endangered peasant community in the South Eastern tip of the Niger Delta region – a region where half a century of oil drilling activities of transnational companies have spawned horrendous social and cultural death.' His chapter examines how the Ogoni people used demonstrations, boycotts, petitions and other counter-narrative forms to challenge the tyranny of Nigeria's nationalist modernity and military oligarchy. Innovatively, Tam-George uses the 'aesthetics of spectacle – a cardinal feature of the theatre, as the main interpretive idiom to examine how Ogoni communal refusal was mobilised against a national and transnational technology of oppression.' What is interesting about the chapter is how Tam-George exposes the contradictions and complicities of Ogoni society that makes it hard for one to offer clear options and choices for Ogoni liberation.

Aleksi Ylonen's chapter on 'internal colonialism,' federalism and secession in Sudan which he terms the 'southern problem' traces the travails and trajectories of the southern Sudanese people's struggle for national self-determination which they finally achieved in January 2011 when the independent state of southern Sudan was born as the 54th new African sovereign state. Ylonen's chapter deals with how the Arab and Muslim dominated state of Sudan imposed its rule over southern Sudan provoking a long struggle for liberation by the southern Sudanese people. Despite the fact that Ylonen depicts the problem as 'southern' but from the southern perspective it becomes the 'northern problem' of domination and abuse of the southern Sudanese by the Khartoum government.

Also writing on the theme of secession are Eric Ebolo Elong and Carlson Anyangwe focusing on the case study of Cameroon. Elong's chapter analyses the historical antecedents which led to the emergence of an Anglophone problem in Cameroon, beginning with the Anglo-French partition of the country in 1919. His focus is on the activities of Anglophone pressure groups such as Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), Southern Cameroons People Organisation (SCAPO) and Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM). These organisations initially sought what is termed a 'two state option' and are agitating for total independence of Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon. Elong examines the implications of these radical demands together with the Bakassi Peninsula Crisis for the nation-state of Cameroon.

On the other hand, Carlson Anyangwe interrogates the interplay of the right of self-determination and the concept of territorial integrity before

analysing the case of the British Southern Cameroons to sovereign statehood. Anyangwe's entry point into this issue is through the legal route, which complements Elong's historical analysis of the same case of the Southern Cameroons.

Part 3 opens with Joseph Mujere's sophisticated analysis of the interplay between migration and perceptions of belonging in postcolonial Africa. Mujere's chapter uses various examples from Africa to explore processes of belonging and the question of autochthons and allogenes (first comers and late comers). The central argument of Mujere is that belonging is a contested and multi-layered phenomenon making it possible for people to have multiple notions of belonging. At the centre of analyses are land and graves and their role in the construction of belonging among many African communities.

Vusilizwe Thebe and France Maphosa both deal with the issues of marginalisation, exclusion and migration from Matebeleland region of Zimbabwe. Thebe sets out to explore Ndebele cross-border migration to South Africa within the context of a wider struggle for livelihoods away from the tentacles of a punitive Zimbabwean state. Thebe argues that Ndebele migration has distinct characteristics and the push factors behind Ndebele movement are different from those that drove the Shona speaking Zimbabweans out of Zimbabwe. The Ndebele, unlike the Shona, are seeking belonging to South Africa away from Zimbabwe which they consider to be a Shona country. On the other hand, Maphosa deploys the concept of *homo sacer* as articulated by the Italian scholar Giorgio Agamben to understand issues of denied citizenship, exclusion and irregular labour migration from Matabeleland.

Fredrick Kisekka-Ntale's chapter examines ethno-nationalism in the northern region of Uganda with a specific focus on the Lord's Resistance Army's war against the Kampala government and the violence this conflict has engendered. Godwin A. Vaaseh's chapter focuses on ethnic-based conflicts in Nigeria and the role of militia groups in fuelling these conflicts. The focus of the chapter is on Arewa People's Congress (APC); Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and Bakassi Boys as the major militia groups. The chapter reveals the underlying factors and impact of these militia groups and how the state has responded to this phenomenon. Taken together, these chapters constitute an enlightening reflection on militias as a troublesome phenomenon that has great potential to interface with terrorists to produce a new challenge in postcolonial Africa.

Part 4 opens with Henning Melber's analysis of how liberation movements of Southern Africa have transformed into governing political parties in Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, in the process betraying the expectations of those who supported them. Melber's focus is on how the former liberation movements have failed to fulfil the popular expectation of the liberation struggles, how they have created what he terms 'dominant party syndrome' which is inimical to democracy and respect for human rights. The chapter can be read as dealing with borders of power and expectations.

It is followed by Olayode Kehinde Olusola on the complex issues of self-determination and the challenges of nationbuilding in postcolonial Africa. He argues that the strong focus on the state as a core and only unit of analysis is inadequate for the realities of contemporary African politics. Similarly, trying to sustain policies based on unreconstructed, traditional, ethnically and linguistically based notions of nation-state nationalism will also lead to unbridled ethno-nationalism with painful social, political and economic consequences.

The last two chapters by John Akokpari and two of his postgraduate students (Claire Price and Kristen Thompson) and Michael O. Bonchuk deal with regionalism and pan-Africanism as possible panacea to the 'northern problem.' Akokpari and his students, argue that while pan-Africanism is an admirable project, the current efforts by the AU to achieve it through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are flawed due to the strong sense of postcolonial nationalism and sovereignty in many African countries. They further argue that there is too much focus on economic imperatives at the expense of other equally important political and cultural considerations that are necessary to address the 'northern problem.'

Bonchuk, on the other hand, focuses on the principle of 'uti possedetis' or boundary maintenance as running counter to aspirations of regional cooperation and integration. He highlights the similarities between European and African boundaries and underscores that Africa must adopt 'transfrontier regionalism' to enable the continent to 'move away from the morass of border conflicts that often negate the momentum of economic cooperation and integration.'

Space matters

Rethinking spatiality in discourses of colonial and postcolonial
'boundaries'

Kudzai Matereke

INTRODUCTION

The earth is in effect one world, in which empty, uninhabited spaces virtually do not exist. Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imagining (Said 1993: 7).

That colonialism left a legacy of instability in Africa is an established thought among many Africanists. For them, the contemporary crisis in postcolonial Africa is primarily one of boundaries curved out by colonialists. Commenting on the political developments in the Horn of Africa in the 1990s, Ali Mazrui identified three postcolonial taboos that were broken. The three taboos were as follows: the taboo of recolonisation – whereby under the 'tutelage' of the U N and former colonial powers, an African state is assisted to return to self-government; the taboo of officially sanctioned succession – when part of a postcolonial state breaks away to become an independent state; and lastly the taboo of retribalisation – whereby the groups demand their governance to be based on their claims of ethnic autonomy (Mazrui 1994: 60).

Mazrui conceded that Africa is bedevilled by 'the bondage of boundaries' which is likely to persist into the future and will see its map redrawn. How has Africa fared since Mazrui's perceptive insights? What quickly spring to mind are the border disputes between the DRC and its neighbours – Zambia, Uganda and Angola; the crisis in Western Sahara that emerges from a territorial dispute between the Saharawi population and Morocco; and recently South Sudan's secession from Northern Sudan. These few examples show how Africa is still haunted by the 'bondage of boundaries'.

This chapter seeks to explore a new way of approaching 'boundaries' in the African postcolonial state. The problem of boundaries in the postcolonial politics has been predominantly analysed through the lenses of history and temporality. In taking this course, analyses have tended to ignore geography and spatiality,

and the sad result of this has been an undertheorised understanding of the inscriptions of power in social and political life. This chapter is an attempt to bring to the fore the notions of 'geography,' 'space,' and 'spatiality' to the practices of both exercising and challenging or resisting power, and how this dynamic plays out in the postcolonial context. In short, the chapter seeks to clarify space and spatiality opens up possibility for re-envisioning postcolonial politics, especially our understanding of identity politics, borders and separatism. In pursuit of this objective, the chapter brings to light the dialectical and inextricable links of geography and history in the making of the postcolonial world. This attempt can only take hold if we begin to understand the colonial state as an architectural product of colonial cartography. In this way, the chapter emphasises that colonial 'boundaries' or what we now call 'national borders' were curved by colonial functionaries who paid no due attention to the cultural composition of the colonised peoples. What followed the initial annexation of territory were the various attempts to create 'nations' out of the disparate communities that were lumped together by the colonial partition.

That the majority of the postcolonial states have adopted these boundaries and maintained them almost as intact as they were at partition partly explains the course taken in the nation-building projects that ensued during the colonial and postcolonial eras. If 'nation' suggests some form of homogeneity, then it can be said that nationbuilding entailed forging new forms of identification for the disparate communities to have some cohesion and to guarantee perpetuity. In this way, postcolonial nationbuilding can be described as 'a communal political project whose aim is to create a promising future out of a terrible past' (Szeman 2003: 8). In this way, nations are 'imagined communities' because despite that the members having no face-to-face contact or even the possibility of knowing each other, according to Anderson (1983: 6) 'yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.' Similarly, Miller (1995: 17) argues that unlike volcanoes or elephants, 'nations are not things that exist in the world independently of the beliefs people have about them.'

Given the fact that colonial partition brought disparate ethnic communities under a single state, there is need to look at how the attempts to create a nation that coincides with a single definable state infrastructure proceeded. The twin notions of 'colonial state formation' and 'postcolonial nation building' emerge in the debates about the boundaries. The former has remained the culprit while the politicians continue to thrust the latter as the solution to the problems created by the former. Hence the 'northern problem' mostly manifests itself as a response to a nationbuilding project gone awry.

In his attempt to address what underlies the African crisis, Griffiths (1995) provides two competing analytical trajectories. The first trajectory identifies the issue of colonial borders as the 'unhealed wounds' of Africa's colonial past while the second trajectory conceives the problem in terms of 'self-inflicted

wounds' incurred in the processes of nationbuilding. Both trajectories can also be used to account for the 'northern problem'. This would provide competing explanations about what causes some groups to be disenchanting and feel excluded in the politics of the postcolony. For this reason, the notion of boundaries needs to be interrogated further not just to account for the nature of national boundaries but also internal boundaries and how they transform the politics found therein.

As Ramutsindela (1998: 291) notes, while many postcolonial African states lacked the enthusiasm to change their international boundaries upon independence, they paid immediate attention to internal boundaries as ways of restructuring the state and re-mapping the political geography in accordance with political aspirations. This entails that internal boundaries were given new socio-political and economic meanings which 'provide the environment for new forms of politics and contain a set of new institutions' in the newly independent state (Ramutsindela 1998: 297). From this, it can be said that rather than being preoccupied with borders and boundaries *between* nations, we are becoming more conscious of borders and boundaries *within* the national territory. If postcolonial politics involves looking at internal boundaries and how they can be re-mapped in the light of political aspirations, what needs to be asked is how internal boundaries are not only sources of exclusion but also conditions of possibility for some citizens to engage in politics. In this way, we should move away from the position that sees boundaries as serving the role of excluding and embrace the notion of boundaries as providing spaces for political action.

The position above serves to address how boundaries *within* the national territory matter. That position can also be fruitfully enhanced by looking at the notion of 'b/order' devised by Henk van Houtum, et al. (2005: 3) to highlight 'the objectification processes of bounded spaces [in] informing people's everyday spatial practices'. The processes lend borders and boundaries a dual purpose: to *enclose* or set *bounds* on and also to *order* territory and whatever falls within it. The notion of borders as enclosures and boundaries 'has traditionally received most attention in wider academic discussions' and it foregrounds 'the material and physical dimensionality of borders' (van Houtum, et al., 2005: 2). The constraint imposed by privileging this 'material morphology' is that it has resulted in the call for dismantling borders – a call which stems from the view that a 'borderless world' brings about the best governance. These calls are misplaced insofar as they are based on a view of materiality of 'borders'; that is borders as physical entities and rationally organised hierarchies of the sharply bounded territorial containers' (van Houtum, et al., 2005: 3). In this way, borders are depicted as a negative feature that flies in the face of a more inclusive, robust and democratic politics.

The depiction of borders as constraints simplifies the complicated political terrain which makes the borders real and also plays down the positive political

outcomes brought about by the inclusive and exclusive political practices of the borders. To side-step this constraint, there is need to see a border not so much as an object or a material artefact but 'as a belief, an imagination that creates and shapes the world, a social reality' (van Houtum, et al., 2005: 3). In this way, borders bound space inasmuch as they order it. The ordering aspect can be described as an act making sense of the world; an act of categorising it. As Cloke and Johnston (2005: 1) write: 'to survive in the world we simplify it.' The process of putting things into categories is one way of simplifying it: 'Without such simplifications, societies could not exist: they could not operate without placing people or things into categories' (Cloke and Johnston 2005: 2). In a similar vein, 'borders' can be seen as providing a source for a more robust democratic form of politics, and political theorists and historians should look at how the existence of 'excluded' zones can bring in vitality, robustness and potential for critique in the social and political formations of the postcolonial state. In this way, they are able to bring into purview how the notion of 'borders' in its broad construal brings in new insights to understanding postcolonial politics. It is in this light that this chapter will analyse the 'northern problem'.

Why space or spatiality? As the epigraph from Said in the opening paragraph shows, geography is central for our understanding of the interplay between territory, politics and identities and how this interplay constructs sites of struggle and counter-domination. This may explain why geography and the notions of space and spatiality have recently undergone 'a profound conceptual and methodological renaissance' (Warf and Arias 1999: 1). Cosgrove (1999: 7) also corroborates this observation by arguing that there is a widely acknowledged 'spatial turn' across arts and social sciences that 'corresponds to post-structuralist agnosticism about both naturalist and universal explanations and about single-voiced historical narratives, and to the concomitant recognition that position and context are centrally and inescapably implicated in all constructions of knowledge.' It is the profundity of this 'spatial turn' that this chapter seeks to foreground and to explore how it functions to enunciate the ways knowledge is produced at the interface or convergence of disciplines.

Following Harvey's argument that 'the geographical imagination is far too pervasive and important a facet of intellectual life to be left alone to geographers' (1995: 161), this chapter seeks to establish how geographical knowledge is not only important for philosophical, political and historical studies but also how these other fields have also enriched the geographical imagination in profound ways. By establishing what Harvey (1995: 161) calls 'the hidden connections' between geography and a multiplicity of other disciplines, this chapter attempts to break the monotony of 'single-discipline perspective' or what Cosgrove (1999: 7) terms 'single-voiced' narratives. The overall aim is to expose the deficiencies and limits of approaching knowledge from the perspective of a single discipline, thus highlighting the need to close the gap and build an intersection

between disciplines and to evolve a 'peculiar tradition' that attempts 'to make physical, social scientific, and humanities coexist' as 'an active site of such an intersection' (Harvey 1995: 161).

By seeking to address the concerns of the centrality of geography and the related notion of space for the African postcolonial state, this chapter raises a very compelling issue of how the disciplines of political science and history can be placed at the centre of enunciating the African crisis. What have emerged are articulations about the nature of the African state and how its construction and institutionalisation remain at the core of the crisis that bedevils it. Thus 'the African state' as a concept needs to be understood in novel ways in order to cast a wider net that captures how its stability or instability and how the ability or inability to reproduce itself and make its institutional framework endure both in the minds of the people and in political practice, can be enhanced by taking the 'spatial turn'.

Elden (2005: 11) argues that there is a disparity between political theory or science which, on one hand, has with 'some kind of understanding of the state, but without the comprehension of its rootedness, its situation, its territory;' and, 'on the other, political geography which purports to understand space and territory, but has an undeveloped sense of the explicitly political and historical aspects they may have.' By following the spirit of Elden's argument that both political theory and geography 'lack a sound knowledge of philosophical and mathematical developments in the conception of space' (2005: 11), this chapter attempts to establish how we can enrich the debates about the issues of colonial and postcolonial 'boundaries' thus helping to establish how conceptions of space in geometry and geography help to clarify issues of territory, state and sovereignty which are central to political theory and practice. The attempt to re-describe the political formations of the postcolonial state in spatial terms is that rather than viewing boundaries as limitations and sources of exclusion, it helps to establish how boundaries provide spaces for political possibilities for political agency.

Having argued how the urge to explore the significance of the notions of space and spatiality is imputed in the need for a more-encompassing and enriching approach to the search for knowledge, I may need to put some points into perspective. The 'spatial turn' is an acknowledgement of the limits of pursuing a single discipline in the search for knowledge. This chapter is a confirmation of this acknowledgement and the writer seeks to frame it in the spirit of the increasing consciousness that the various disciplines are characterised by 'simultaneity and interwoven complexity' (Soja 1999: 261) and that it is only through acknowledging this 'intersection' or disciplinary coexistence (Harvey 1995: 161) that we can expand the horizons of knowledge. This is not to underrate or undervalue the approach of specialists like historians or sociologists who may be keen to apply a specific mode of thought on a subject. Rather, it is

an attempt to underscore the point that an approach that situates the subject of study at the intersection of these approaches is richer than an approach that utilises only one mode of thinking.

PHILOSOPHY OF SPACE AND SPACE OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophical debates about space have a long history winding back from the ancient Greek thinkers to the present. Zeno and Parmenides of the fourth century BCE Eleatic School shared a monistic metaphysical thesis which held reality as single and indivisible, thus concluding that thinking about space and motion were impossible. Euclid's geometry conceived a point as that which has no parts or no magnitude and a line as length without breadth. From this, he postulated that we can draw a straight line from any one point to the other thus allowing us to connect any two points in space. This renders space as divisible into parts which can be connected together. Later, Descartes took the notion of space to another level by positing that space and physical entities (bodies) are inseparable; 'body' means extension in space. For Descartes, mathematics is the primary way of representing the world. The implication of this was that philosophy must adopt this mathematical character to prove its worth. Isaac Newton later claimed that space was a self-subsistent 'container'; a 'boundless uniform Sensorium' in which God, because of his ability to be in all places, is able to do His will and to move the bodies within it (Leshem 2003: 82). Newton's 'boundless Sensorium' is *absolute* as it is not acted upon by bodies and remains without relation to anything external.

But Gottfried Leibniz rejected Newton's conception of absolute space by conceiving space as *relative*; it depicts relations between objects. In this way, space denotes 'an order of things which exist at the same time, considered as existing together' and it is also 'something absolutely uniform, and without things placed in it, one point of space absolutely does not differ in anything from another point of space' (Ariew and Watkins 2000: 307). Kant was against Newton's absolute space and Leibniz's relational space. Rather, he conceived space as subjective or as an *a priori* attribute of our intuition and is not a feature of physical reality that can be conceived independently of the mind. He argued: 'Space is nothing else than the form of all phenomena of the external sense, that is, the subjective condition of the sensibility, under which alone external intuition is possible' (Kant 2008: 44).

This chapter takes issue with the Newtonian and Kantian conceptions. Newton's conception renders absolute space as a 'container' which people and things and the objects they create populate. While for Kant space is a frame of reference within which we identify our objects of perceptual experience, for Newton space is infinite or unbounded; it just exists everywhere and independ-

ently of anything else. As Agnew (2011: 320) notes, the Newtonian view is that 'space is absolute, in the sense that it is an entity in itself, independent of whatever objects and events occupy it, containing these objects and events, and having separate powers from them.' Elsewhere, Agnew (1994) discusses this as the 'territorial trap' which he describes as an array of assumptions in geopolitical discourse about the relationships between society, states and territory. Agnew identifies the assumptions as follows: first, they bring about reified sovereignty (that sovereignty is the state's complete control over its clearly bounded territorial space); second, they present domestic and foreign as severed political domains; and third, they lead to the view of the state as prior to and as the container of national society and culture.

The second problem with the Newtonian understanding of space as an infinite container is that it describes physical space as independent of time. Harvey argues that space and time are not only interdependent but also co-determine the distribution of objects and processes:

Space and time are neither absolute nor external to processes but are contingent and contained within them. There are multiple spaces and times (and space-times) implicated in different physical, biological and social processes. The latter all *produce* [...] their own forms of space and time. Processes do not operate *in* but *actively construct* space and in so doing define distinctive scales for their development' (Harvey 1996: 53 emphasis in original).

Agnew's argument about the limitations of conceiving space as a container provides an entry point for other ways of conceiving space. For example, Soja urges us to go beyond the notions that have dominated discourses of space: space as merely a physical quality of the material world or its philosophical features of being absolute, relative or relational (Soja 2010: 17). He argues that though these dominant approaches remain important, there is need to employ other approaches. Hence he takes an epistemological approach informed by the contention that space is not a given or an empty container that waits to be filled. Rather, it is a culturally constructed thing that can be altered. Hence we need to rethink the spatiality of human life as 'a complex social product, a collectively created and purposeful configuration' (Soja 2010: 17).

Soja categorises space into three. 'Firstspace' as the 'real' or directly experienced world of empirically measurable and mappable phenomena, and for those who see geography as a formal science, this is the only objective or 'real' space worth studying (Soja 1999: 265). In contrast, the 'Secondspace' is more subjective and 'imagined', more concerned with images and representations of spatiality, and rather than being entirely fixed on materially perceivable spaces and geographies, it concentrates on and explores more cognitive conceptual and symbolic worlds, thus tending to be more idealistic than materialist (Soja

1999: 266). Soja calls 'Thirdspace' the enquiry into the origins and effects of the spatial turn and also the attempt to expand the scope and practical relevance of how we think about space and its related concepts of place, location, landscape architecture, environment, home, city, region, territory, and geography.

Soja's theory of space is an adaptation of Lefebvre's theory of the 'conceptual triad' which understands space as a social production that consists of three interdependent elements: spatial practice or '*perceived space*' (which Soja terms 'Firstspace'); representations of space or '*conceived space*' (which Soja calls 'Secondspace'); and representational spaces or '*lived space*'. Perceived space is what is available to our senses, the material expressions of the lived social realities and relations in space; and it embraces 'the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of social formations' (Lefebvre 1991: 33). Conceived space is the dominant space of any given society because of its intimate ties 'to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations' (Lefebvre 1991: 33). Hence conceived space significantly influences the production of space and it finds objective expression in 'bureaucratic and political authoritarianism immanent to a repressive space' (Lefebvre 1991:49). The third element of the triad is representational space which is the lived space, the space of daily experience. Soja terms this 'Thirdspace'. It is space that 'speaks':

It has an effective kernel or centre: Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time' (Lefebvre 1991:42).

Thus the elusive nature of lived space makes it a target of intervention by planners, bureaucrats, architects and others who wish to dominate, rationalise and order it. Lefebvre's thoughts about space help to establish how space is produced and in turn produces subjects and processes and how these productions have a political bearing. Lefebvre's theory of space as a social product constitutes a break from the dominant understandings of space as an independent material reality that exists in and of itself. Hence by pushing for the notion of *production of space*, Lefebvre brings into purview how space is fundamentally bound up with social and political reality.

By saying space 'is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object' but as 'the outcome of past actions,' Lefebvre conceives of space as that which 'permits fresh actions to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others' thus renders it as allowing 'a great diversity of knowledge' (Lefebvre 1991:73). Thus space is neither an 'innocent' nor neutral entity. It is acted upon by different actors and it also acts on them, thus it simultaneously shapes human interaction and accomplishments and also can be radically altered. In this way, space is consti-

tutive of the metaphysical and epistemological productions that are related to it. It is also constitutive of identities insofar as it defines who we are.

It is important to ask what implications these articulations of space have on contemporary understandings of territory and borders and on our overall conceptualisation of African politics. The first observation that needs to be made is that the African state was bequeathed by the colonial project; a modernisation project which Kipling (1899) urged his fellow British nationals to 'take up the White Man's burden' to the 'sullen peoples' and the 'Half-devil and half-child'. The colonial encounter was one of reproducing space and recreating people, and it entailed that the European experienced the colonised and their territory as Other; they 'invented' the colonised.

Mbembe (2001: 2) describes the Othering process of the colonial project as 'the problem of the *'I' of others and of human beings we perceive as foreign to us.'* Hence knowledge about the colonised can be described in terms of Mudimbe's 'idea of Africa' as an 'invention of the colonial library'; that is, it is 'a product of the West and was conceived and conveyed through conflicting systems of knowledge' (Mudimbe 1994: xi). Further, it needs to be remembered that through the history of colonialism, Africa inherited the modern Westphalian state form and its concomitant categories of sovereignty, territory, governance and progress. This confirms the observation by Harvey (1996: 222) that while it is natural for societies to change, grow and evolve new conceptions of space, time and value, there are also instances when these new concepts are imposed through conquest, imperial expansion or neo-colonial domination. This brings us to the debate of how colonial space was mapped.

MAPPING COLONIAL SPACE

As defined by Timothy Mitchell, colonising refers 'not simply to the establishing of European presence but also to the spread of a political order that inscribes in the social world a new conception of space, new forms of personhood, and the new means of manufacturing the experience of the real' (Mitchell 1988: ix). This renders the colonising process as a total transformation of the colonial space, thus making it a deeper process than is usually assumed. Mitchell argues that the task of his book, *Colonising Egypt*, is to make an analysis of 'the metaphysics of the power of the colonial project,' and by this, he attempts to highlight how colonialism aimed to regulate the daily lives of the colonised. In this section, I will attempt to address the question of how the colonial process regulated the colonised society by making specific reference to the notions of space and time.

Convened in the wake of the threats of the collapse of the arrangements that had guided the imperial encroachment into Africa, the Berlin Congress

took place not in Africa but in Germany, and it was made possible by the map. The colonial map as a strategic apparatus produced by imperial cartographers proves to be a potent force in the representation of Africa: the process of the making and unmaking of Africa; the use of signage to depict the positionality of Africa, 'laying bare' its interiority; cognising a territory, thus redeeming it from the status of a *terra incognita*. Conceived this way, cartography becomes an art of refinement of measuring space; an art whose aims become more clearly defined through the use of mathematical principles.

Maps (like the electrical gadgets that record visual or pictorial images or signals) are framing devices that 'produce' space insofar as they demarcate or create borders for the purpose of excluding and including certain entities and allow space to be represented. Maps, atlases, pictures and paintings are all images that represent the physicality of the territory or the body, such that the entity represented is portrayed as a surface that can be mathematically calculable. How do maps work? Wood and Fels answer this question in the following way:

They make present – they represent – the accumulated thought and labour of the past ... about the milieu we simultaneously live in and collaborate on bringing being. In so doing they enable the past to become part of our living ... *now ... here*' (1992: 1).

Once a surface of the earth is represented on the map, it can propel a deeply immense sense of imagination. Marlow, the character in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, reveals this:

Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, when I grow up I will go there (Conrad 1996: 22).

It was the 'blank spaces' that got filled up by colonial occupation. Marlow also describes the river on the map as 'resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest curving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depths of the land' (Conrad 1996: 22). This is what Wood and Fels (1992:44) describe as 'the power of maps to *stir the imagination*.' In the same vein, it can be said that Cecil Rhodes' 'Cape to Cairo' dream was made possible by imagination propelled by the ability not only to represent space but also to represent it as blank space that requires occupation by humans who are 'men enough to face the darkness' and 'to live in the midst of the incomprehensible, which is also detestable' (Conrad 1996: 20; 21). Thus to have your imagination

stirred is to be motivated to conquer. Conrad's Marlow describes conquest in the following way:

[...] The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea – something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to (Conrad 1996: 21).

Hence we can say that the map invented both Africa and the African. With Africa depicted as the 'dark continent', the African was invented as the savage.

Mudimbe depicts the 'colonial library' as a distinct 'body of knowledge constructed with the explicit purpose of faithfully translating and deciphering the African object' and that its depth as well as ambition 'disseminates the concept of deviation as the best symbol of the idea of Africa' (Mudimbe 1994: xii). Key to the inventions of the colonial library was the representation of the colonised by some anthropologists who took racial difference as a mark of primitiveness, thus forming the grounds for the abnormalisation of the native.

In a similar vein, the representations of space and the people who inhabit as Other can benefit from Foucault's idea of *epistémés* or the various epistemological structures that have operated to order knowledge at different historical junctures. He writes: 'In any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in a practice' (Foucault 1970: 168). However, despite Foucault's warning against viewing *epistémés* in a totalitarian manner, he described *epistémés* as almost equivalent to world-views: 'episteme may be suspected of being something like a world-view, a slice of history common to all branches of knowledge, which imposes on each one the same norms and postulates, a general stage of reason, a certain structure of thought that the man of a particular period cannot escape – a great body of legislation written once and for all by some anonymous hand' (Foucault 1972: 191). The Foucauldian notion of *epistémés* allows us to establish how the colonial state was constituted on the basis of a classificatory scheme by which things and people found in the colonial space were profiled, organised, categorised and discriminated. The colonial explorer was trained in 'the calculative practice of 'autopsis' – the recording and classifying of everything around him' Crampton (2010: 96). While the word 'everything' may be taken literally, it needs to be emphasised that it implies *everything* the explorer considered important to *know*, thus suggesting the explorers' involvement in what Cosgrove (1999:11) terms 'mapping's selectivities.' This points out how the social and environmental exclusions involved in European colonialism was implicated in

the practices of 'a double denial of their selectivity, first of their often considerable dependence upon information supplied by non-European inhabitants of the territories mapped, and second of the physical and social landscapes as occupied and understood by those inhabitants themselves' (Cosgrove 1999:11).

Developing a colonial *episteme* resulted in the taxonomisation of racial categories which was a process of codifying a racial hierarchy to legitimatise the subordination of the colonised to the colonial project. Hence Stoler (2002:206) argues that the colonial regimes were 'taxonomic states', 'whose administrations were charged with defining and interpreting what constituted racial membership, citizenship, political subversion, and the scope of the state's jurisdiction over morality.'

As Cosgrove (1999:11) notes, the map is different from the territory precisely through acts of 'selecting and highlighting specific phenomena, consciously removing others, ignoring yet more and rendering some choices incapable of adoption by virtue of prior decisions about scale and frame.' For this reason, Cosgrove describes the process of mapping as 'to take the measure of a world, and more than merely take it, to figure the measure so taken in such a way that it may be communicated between people, places or times' (1999: 9). From this, it can be argued that the mapping process is broader. He argues:

The measure of mapping is not restricted to the mathematical; it may equally be spiritual, political or moral. [...] Acts of mapping are creative, sometimes anxious, moments in coming to knowledge about the world, and the map is both the spatial embodiment of knowledge and a stimulus to further cognitive engagements' (Cosgrove 1999: 9).

If the mapping process is a selective process which conjures up the idea that the cartographers make choices about 'the presences and absences they create' (Cosgrove 1999: 11), then it can be argued that colonial mapping was implicated in processes of claiming objective knowledge about the spaces of the natives. European colonial mapping not only excluded the natives from the realm of humanity but also included them as colonial subjects to be colonised or as flora and fauna to be protected both from each other and also from the vagaries of the tropical climates.

Mapping out the contours of the colonial state was followed by the consolidation of colonial rule through the creation of yet another set of internal boundaries within the colonial state. Through these boundaries, the colonial state and its subjects were spatially reconfigured in ways that would be efficacious to the demands of colonial governance. The spatial reconfiguration was achieved through practices of power which also created 'hot spots' where grievances simmered and antagonisms were constructed. Thus it can be argued that colonial spatial reconfiguration saw the construction of distinctive 'maps of

grievances', a term which explicitly attempts to theorise 'how the construction of grievances has both a distinctive spatiality and is constitutive of political identities' (Featherstone 2003: 405).

The notion of 'map of grievances' highlights how space and politics converge and also explains how oppositional forms of politics emerge to constitute dynamic trajectories of political identities that challenge or contest the multiple performances of political power and domination. Further, using this notion in the analyses of postcolonial politics is beneficial because it shows how the relationship between politics and space allows for better ways of envisioning how the formation of grievances plays out in regards to the formation of political identities. The debate about the process of mapping can also be conceptualised as centrally imputed in the power/knowledge symbiosis. Governing the modern colonial state involved the invention of what Scott (2005: 29) described as new 'rules of the political game'. However, as Scott argues, with colonialism, it was not only the rules of the political game that changed, 'but *the political game itself* changed – not only did the relation of forces between coloniser and colonised change, but so did the *terrain* of the political struggle itself' (Scott 2005: 29).

In short, Scott points out that colonial governance brought new forms of *political rationalities*. This concept will be elaborated below. It is interesting to note how the notion of 'game' invokes Foucault's notion of 'games of truth' which he used to frame how new forms of knowledge are created and to account for what counts as knowledge within a specific set of practices. Foucault provides a specific rendition:

The word 'game' can lead you into error: when I say 'game', I mean an ensemble of rules for the production of truth. It is not a game in the sense of imitating or entertaining ... it is an ensemble of procedures that lead to a certain result, which can be considered in function of its principles and rules of procedure, as valid or invalid, as winner or loser' (Foucault 1988: 16).

The definition of 'games' invokes that what passes as truth in any historical epoch is simply an exercise power: the game of truth-making involves rules, practices and resources that validate it. I will further expound this point by drawing the implications of Foucault's notion of governmentality and how it is beneficial to the postcolonial context.

GOVERNING IN THE POSTCOLONIAL SPACE

Lefebvre's understanding of space as a production links very well with Foucault's notion of governmentality. This understanding is important because it helps to comprehend not only how society is structured but also how society

utilises space to structure the practices and possibilities of everyday life. Thus the notion of 'social space' is central for understanding the array of forms of interventions that are carried out to determine social, economic and political outcomes. For that reason, I will appropriate Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' to discuss how postcolonial space is a site of various interventions by the state and to suggest how such interventions give rise to spaces of dissent or resistance.

It is somewhat unnerving to make reference to Foucault in the debates about colonial and postcolonial constructions and exercise of power because Foucault occupies an ambiguous position in regards to his take on issues of colonialism. As noted by Legg (2007: 265), 'whilst Foucault has provided many of the tools necessary to unpack the power-knowledge relationships of post-Enlightenment Europe, especially in their spatial groundedness, his silence on the colonial construction of European modernity and mutual constitution of "metropolis" and "periphery" is astounding.' Thus in my current discussion, I make reference to Foucault not to suggest that his thoughts were articulated with Africa in mind, but rather to suggest that a Foucauldian understanding of 'governmentality' allows for a re-description of postcolonial practices of power, thus making it central in helping us envisage the 'northern problem' as a manifestation of 'spaces' of resistances to the modes of practice and exercise of power.

Foucault clearly acknowledges his 'obsession' with the problematic notion of space and spatial praxis, when in his 1976 interview with the geographers of the French journal *Hérodote*, he declared: 'Geography must indeed lie at the heart of my concerns' (Foucault 1980a: 77). Despite reproaches for these spatial obsessions, he maintained the obsessions had allowed him to establish 'the relations that are possible between power and knowledge' (1980a: 69). Hence Foucault's knowledge-power duo becomes a triadic symbiosis of knowledge-power-space. The exercise of power involves the topography of 'knowing-how-to-think-space' (Crampton and Elden 2007: 24), thus highlighting how space is a vital element in both the production and exercise of knowledge and the control of individuals. Below, I seek to analyse how the symbiosis fits into the Foucauldian understanding of governmentality.

Foucault defined 'government' as 'an activity that undertakes to conduct individuals throughout their lives by placing them under the authority of a guide responsible for what they do and for what happens to them' (Foucault 1997: 67). In this light, Lemke provides a semantic interpretation of 'governmentality' that identifies it as made of '*gouverner*' and '*mentalité*', establishing a link between governing and modes of thought, thus serving to highlight that it is impossible 'to study the technologies of power without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them' (Lemke 2001:190). Hence Foucault's notion of government is centred on 'conduct' insofar as it captures how various forms of power are linked to process of subjectification. He identifies 'conduct'

as having an equivocal nature which 'is one of the best aids for coming to terms with the specificity of power relations' (Foucault 1982: 220). He avers: 'For to "conduct" is at the same time to "lead" others (according to mechanisms of coercion which are, to varying degrees, strict) and a way of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities' (Foucault 1982: 220).

What is central here is that Foucault's exploits the double meaning of 'conduct' which can be rendered to mean to lead and also as a way of behaving oneself in an attempt to highlight how conduct is implicated in a double process of leading others and also self-conduct. This reveals how his understanding of power is distinct from domination. He bemoans that the relationship between power and domination has been under-theorised because the two 'notions have been ill-defined' and urges:

[W]e must distinguish the relationships of power as strategic games between liberties – strategic games that result in the fact that some people try to determine the conduct of others – and the states of domination, which are what we ordinarily call power. And, between the two, between the games of power and the states of domination, you have governmental technologies' (Foucault 1988:19).

By re-articulating the distinction between power and domination, Foucault seeks to highlight that power and its exercise is not to be identified with a specific centre or locus. Rather, it is diffused and depersonalised and permeates beyond 'simply a relationship between partners' to 'a way in which certain actions modify others' thus allowing for power to be conceived not as 'a renunciation of freedom', but an exercise of it (Foucault 1982: 219-20). Thus when Foucault (1982: 221) argues that to govern is to 'to structure the possible field of action for others' he means that subjects (the governed) still remain with the ability to initiate and secure possible modes of actions in response to their government. So far, we have seen how governmentality raises Foucault's conceptions of the subject's relations with power. There is need to go a step further to ask: What have these relations to do with space and postcolonial politics? We turn to this question now.

Foucault conceives 'to govern' as the ability to *create space* for the exercise of power for both the governed and those who govern. Thus governing carries with it spatial implications: regulation of men and things in space, generating knowledge of population, enhancing health and economic prosperity. In these ways, individuals are expected to respond to government rationalities by constituting subjectivities and to adopt appropriate and regulated behaviours. Thus to govern is effectively to act through free subjects, reconfiguring the agency of the citizens and nurturing by way of both incentives and, where necessary, coercion so that they act as free subjects. For Foucault, this understanding of governing entails that there is an intersection between governing others and

governing the self. Hence Foucault endeavours to show how the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other's emergence (Lemke 2001: 191).

This is because the modern state and its array of institutions individuate the subject and allows him to exercise his agency within a framework of a range of possibilities. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault appropriates Bentham's Panopticon as a model of surveillance to describe the operations of power and discipline in modern society. As an ideal architectural design of a prison that allows the guard to see each prisoner while the prisoner cannot see the guard, the panopticon acts as a method of dividing and arranging space to instil discipline in the inmates whose actions are shaped into conformity by the assumed omnipresence of surveillance and the fear of being punished. Hence the individual undertakes an internal self-monitoring process.

There is something that has to be said about Foucault's 'nominalist' description of power if his ideas are to be relevant to the postcolonial practices of political power. Foucault's nominalist account can be understood broadly as metaphysical and epistemological accounts. As a metaphysical account, Foucault's nominalism is a critique of physicalism or inherent structure of the world, 'that the world does not come articulated into categories that we must discover; instead, it is we who organise and classify, who construct "facts" and verify statements about them' (Allen 2005:98). As an epistemological account, nominalism is an attempt to describe truth of statements as lying not in the supposed relations that exist between what statements say and what the world out there is. In both senses, nominalism argues that there is no objective reality, the world has no pre-given structure or identity, and truth and all that exists is nothing but products of discourse, knowledge is a social construction. In the same vein, the nominalist account entails that power is not a property possessed or lacked by certain individuals but a productive force that not only makes sense in practice but is also modified or transformed in its very exercise. For the reason that power is immanent in social relations, ubiquitous and productive, it would be wrong to identify certain sections of the population as having power and others as having no power.

The move to view power not as a property emanating from a specific locality but rather as a multiplicity of forced relations that is mobile and pervades the social body allows Foucault to identify operations of power 'from below'. This entails that the ordinary assumptions to describe the rulers and the ruled as existing in binary opposition is misplaced. This thesis can be applied to the current debate about postcolonial politics. Rather than reducing the issue of borders and boundaries to a binarism of resistance and domination (that is, resistance of a specific excluded group and the domination of a specific regime of power), we should see borders and boundaries as providing conditions of possibility for the exercise of mechanisms and strategies of power. In this way, borders and

boundaries are sites of complex processes of domination, resistance, and also appropriation that allow for the constitution of power relations ‘with effects of resistance and counter-investments,’ so that there never exists ‘one type of stable subjugation, given once and for all’ (Foucault 1976:97). In essence the issue of borders and boundaries and how they are imbued in the politics of identity refutes the existence of a single source of power, thus allowing us to envisage the seemingly excluded groups as real political actors in the field of multiple and mobile relations of power. Hence the Foucauldian notion of power seeks to subvert the dominant paradigm that sees power as a monopoly of the elites. By foregrounding the view that power relations can be modified by their practices, Foucault brings into purview how praxis of resistance can diffuse power, thus allowing us to conceive power as strategies and discursive practices for resistance. It is in the light of this understanding of power that we should understand the ‘northern problem’. This point will be elaborated further below.

THE ‘NORTHERN PROBLEM’ AS ‘COUNTER-SPACES’ FOR ‘COUNTER-CONDUCTS’

This section seeks to bring the notion of the ‘northern problem’ closer to Foucault’s notion of power with the goal of addressing how knowledge-power-space are relevant to postcolonial politics. The author will initiate this debate by making reference to Foucault’s Panopticon which he depicts as a space of social control, and will also link this idea with Foucault’s notions of ‘counter-spaces’ and ‘counter-conducts’. While the Panopticon highlights the necessary connections between space, power and knowledge, it, however, leaves us to question whether subjects can resist or escape the control, visibility and disciplinary effects of society. This question emerges from what appears to be Foucault’s depiction of the Panopticon as a machine which ‘produces homogeneous effects of power’ (Foucault 1977: 202) through visibility and its normalisation effects. In this way, a visible subject (like prisoners, factory workers, school kids in the classroom, etc.) becomes amenable to control and effects of domination. It has to be noted, however, that the question posed above rests on a few assumptions: the first assumption is that visibility is always intended to dominate. The second assumption is that the subject of the gaze is rendered passive and at the mercy of the gaze of the disciplinary authority.

These assumptions fail to acknowledge that subjects have an active role in the ways they react to and interact with the gaze, thus affirming that they have room to resist and transform the effects of the gaze. Further, by assuming that subjects are passive to the normalisation effects of visibility and the gaze, we fail to acknowledge that norms are collectively generated. So to directly answer the question, Foucault’s conception of the disciplinary effects of visibility does

not negate the subject's resistance to the exercise of power and the disciplinary effects of visibility. After all, we can recall that Foucault (1980b) argued that there are no relations of power without resistance and that resistance is rendered more real and effective as it is formed at the point where relations of power are exercised.

That Foucault's panoptic conception of visibility allows for the subject's resistance is also buttressed by his call for a new way of investigating power relations that take 'the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point' (Foucault 1982: 211). This perspective allows us to conceive politics as the omnipresent struggles between contenders. From this we can formulate Foucault's notion of the political as one characterised by a proliferation of forms of resistance to power, 'politics is no more or less than that which is born with resistance to governmentality, the first uprising, the first confrontation' (Foucault 2007a: 390). The intention of this section is to frame how Foucault's perspective on power forms the basis upon which we can have a sustained analysis of the 'northern problem' as a site of resistance and protest. Foucault's presupposition that where there is power there too resides resistance or revolt helps us to figure out how the politically excluded zones that constitute the 'northern problem' can stand as creative sites for a counter-discourse with a potential for a politics of resistance.

Foucault's notion of the political is characterised by resistance rather than acquiescence to power. Hence the political is best captured by what he terms 'the will not to be governed'. Was Foucault advocating for anarchy? He is not advocating for the will not to be governed *at all*. Rather, he advocates for the will not to be governed in a particular form or way or to a certain extent: 'the will not to be governed thusly like that by these people, at this price' (Foucault 2007b: 75). Foucault clarifies how 'the will not to be governed' needs not be confused with some forms of weak or strong forms of resistance to processes of governmentality. He argues that what he terms 'the will not to be governed' is distinct from 'movements of resistance and subordination' or 'revolts of conduct' in that its objective is 'a different form of conduct [...] wanting to be conducted differently by other leaders' 'towards other objectives' 'and through other procedures and methods' (Foucault 2007a: 194–5). He also insists it is neither 'revolts of conduct' (2007a: 196) against the power of a sovereign nor 'disobedience' nor 'dissidence' nor 'insubordination' (2007a: 200) but rather a plea for 'another form of conduct: to be led differently, by other men, and towards other objectives than those proposed by the apparent and visible official governmentality of society' (2007a: 199).

From the preceding understanding of resistance as a struggle against processes put in place to guide the conduct of others, Foucault argues that other terms that have been used to describe resistance are inadequate to capture what he thinks about the forms of action he has in mind: revolt is too strong;

disobedience is too weak; insubordination as steeped in the military; and dissidents as steeped in religious and socialist movements. Rather he prefers to call his form of resistance as ‘counter-conducts’ which involves ‘struggle[s] against the processes implemented for conducting others’ (Foucault 1976: 95). The notion of ‘counter-conducts’ allows us to dislodge the assumptions that visibility’s normalisation and disciplinary effects render the subject passive by sapping its agentive force or vitality. By allowing us to interrogate how identities and subjectivities are constituted through resistance, the notion of counter-conducts diffuses the binary between power and resistance thus foregrounding the Foucauldian thesis that power is always in motion and diffused rather than having a single source or centres. This allows power and freedom to form a continuum.

The implication of this is that resistance becomes a form of critique by which an individual renegotiates the limits of the self. Resistance becomes an act of transgressing the limits of the social order and it allows the subject to circumvent or move beyond the social categories and also impel the transgression of limits of the self and the social order, so as to broaden the subject’s space for resistance. From this understanding of resistance as critique, it means that to govern, think about governing, and searching for the ways to govern, is to engage with the question: ‘how not to be governed *like that*, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them limits exercise’ (Foucault 2007b: 44).

By saying Foucault’s form of resistance does not render him an anarchist, we are trying to show how his form of resistance is necessary for political engagement. Thus Cadman (2010: 540) argues that governmental counter-conducts are not additional or reactive mechanisms, which we might embrace, acknowledge, or omit in our analyses of modern political governmentality, but wholly immanent and necessary to the formation and development of governmentality. This point makes resistance necessary for political practice.

If resistance is central for any exercise of power, then we can argue that the recalcitrance and proliferation of the ‘northern problem’ in Africa’s postcolonial politics should be viewed as the manifestation of the domain of the political. Soja utilises the notion of ‘Thirdspace’ to highlight how a reconception of space disrupts, deconstructs and reconstitutes our understanding of identities and power relations. The Thirdspace is a space of creativity and radical openness; a space where the marginalised (re)create alterity through forms of resistance. This understanding of the productive potential of Thirdspace concurs with Foucault’s description of power as the ‘metaphor of the point which progressively irradiates its surroundings’ (Foucault 1980c: 199).

This conclusion also draws the political implications of this conception of power so that Foucault’s notions of space and spatiality can be interrogated and

given an explicit political dimension. The inevitability of resistance provides a context for what Foucault terms 'other spaces' or 'other sites' that 'have the curious property of being in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect' (Foucault 1986: 24). This brings us to Foucault's idea of a 'heterotopia', which he described as follows:

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality (Foucault 1986: 24).

This space is absolutely 'Other'; it is unlike 'utopia' or Greek pun for 'no place'; an ideal place whose actual location remains imaginary in that it makes reference to real space. However, it is also like a utopia in that it actually exists as a place which subverts or undoes the usual spatial order. Thus heterotopias are opposed to society because they express a radical contrast with the rest of society and pose a challenge to it. They are radical sites which construct an alternative reality and thus challenge, invert, subvert the social and political institutions and seek to transform them. By contesting the conventions of the dominant society, heterotopias nurture alternative forms of life and sustain the capacity for dissent, critique and pluralism which offers vitality, efficacy and creativity to the political domain.

The productive capacity of heterotopia in enhancing democratic engagement echoes Mouffe's notion of 'the political' which she conceives as core for understanding her version of 'radical democratic politics'. She frames the domain of the political as a space for the contest for power constituted by an antagonism, which is an unavoidable characteristic of being human; that humans naturally feel an urge to belong and by belonging they unavoidably create oppositions between 'we'/'us' and 'they' (Mouffe, 2005). Heterotopic spaces highlight not only conflict between spaces but also show how different and opposing spaces are entangled in complex relations of power. Conceiving postcolonial space from the perspective of heterotopias brings to light the resemblances between the postcolonial state and the colonial state that preceded it. The notion of the heterotopias can provide an entry point for the analysis of recalcitrance of the 'northern problem' as a site for subverting the dominant social and political narratives, so as to enhance the proliferation of plural identities that enhance postcolonial democratisation.

CONCLUSION

How does the analysis above help to confront the 'northern problem'? We need to understand the 'northern problem' from the perspective of 'internal boundaries' that exclude certain sections of the populations while including others. Thus the 'boundaries' create margins and marginalised people. While these margins can be extreme forms of estrangement and alienation, they can also be productive sites for political action. According to bell hooks (1990), margins can serve as spaces of radical openness for one to locate oneself and to form a community of resistance. Thus marginality is a crucial position and place for the oppressed and exploited.

Thus hooks, like Soja, re-examines how to re-envision spatiality to recreate possibilities for new politics by which communities of difference can resist, challenge and subvert dominant practices of power. Hence it can be contended that the 'northern problem' needs to be conceived from the perspective of spaces of marginality that subjects choose; a 'site of radical possibility, a space of resistance'. For hooks, understanding marginality as a space of resistance is important because 'it is there in that space of collective despair that one's creativity, one's imagination is at risk, there that one's mind is fully colonized, there that the freedom one longs for is lost' (hooks 1990: 150). For hooks, a space of marginality is not only a site of repression but also, more importantly, a site of resistance from which the marginalised may initiate political engagement and offer resistance to exercise and operation of power. Thus, choosing marginality is a critical turning point in the subject's construction of alternative forms of subaltern identity and to invigorate a community of resistance. Overall, conceiving the 'northern problem' as spaces of marginality provides a context in which we can envisage how postcolonial internal boundaries wield potential for a vibrant postcolonial politics.

Africa in search of (in)security

Beyond the bondage of boundaries

Eric George and Nazar Hilal

INTRODUCTION

Understanding identity-based claims across individual, communal and societal levels necessitates a rethinking and a re-negotiating of identities in an effort to secure well-being and survival within imposed territorial structures, economic systems, and political allegiances. Borrowing the concept of the ‘everyday’, we suggest that a wider understanding of human security may offer the possibility of diminishing identity conflicts by recognising the diversity of African societies and returning security to its original holistic understanding and functional purpose. Rather than diverting efforts to the securing of borders and forging a national identity from above, human security may allow for a local and community-based determination of security issues and the emergence of local solutions which reflect, recognise and compose with the insecurities generated by the presence of a co-existing plurality of groups.

We explore the notion that human security may provide a framework to addressing the ‘northern problem’, the often violent pursuit of identity-based claims in Africa, by centring attention on ‘everyday’ needs and interactions and the peaceful recognition of the ‘insecurity’ of identities in multi-ethnic societies. A contextualised concept of identity within a human security framework may thus provide insight into how Africa might develop innovative approaches to security that are more authentic reflections of at once local, national and continental security concerns. By embracing the ‘insecurity’ of diversity beyond the bondage of the national-territorial state paradigm, new opportunities may present themselves for the application of African security solutions based on the recognition of local needs and, in doing so, help to address the root causes of the ‘northern problem.’

The chapter is divided into 6 sections. Following the introduction a second section provides an overview of the concepts of identity and conflict in Africa. A third section then examines the impact of the colonial partition of Africa on identity, while a fourth section examines the failures and possibilities of a pan-African identity. A fifth section presents the case that human security’s concern

for the 'everyday' and the concept of 'popular peace' can serve as a lens through which to re-examine and mitigate the identity dimension of conflicts in Africa.

IDENTITY AND CONFLICT IN AFRICA

In the introduction to this book Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mhlanga defined the 'northern problem' as referring to '[...] the existence of an enclosed and disgruntled group claiming a particular history, particular myth of foundation, particular heroes, particular symbols and signs, and particular identity that is different from the dominant "ethnie" around which post-colonial nation-states are constructed and imagined.' Ali Mazrui (2010: xiii) argues that 'Most of the political violence in Africa concerns ethnic, racial, religious, national, or ideological boundaries'. For Mazrui, 'What is at stake quite often are boundaries of identity, engulfed within frontiers of conflict' (Mazrui, 2010: xiii). Ethnicity is framed and defined by claims and perceptions that include 'race, ethnicity, religion, language, nationalism, and cultural/common heritage' (Francis, 2006: 76). During the 1990s observers identified an apparently determinant 'ethnic' dimension of conflict in Africa as a 'new barbarism' causal explanation which culminated in 'crudely primordialist prophecies of doom' according to Hughes (2011: 3). From a primordialist perspective, ethnic groups possess 'ontological antipathies and entrenched antagonisms that are unchanging' (Abubakar, 2010: 68). An instrumentalist view suggests that identity is manipulated by elites as part of an effort to consolidate power (Abubakar, 2010: 71). Francis (2006: 76) asserts that elites make use of ethnicity to build their constituency in order to strengthen their hold on power, entrenching an ethnic dimension to the competition between groups vying for control of the state. He further states that this politicisation of ethnicity may lead to violence in situations where communities and individuals come to believe in '[...] a threat perception to core identities and values and [how they] create a mobilizational force for armed conflict' (Francis, 2006: 76).

Abubakar says that the constructivist interpretation emphasises that '[...] identity boundaries are not fixed; instead they are malleable, fluid and constantly changing' and constructed through the reproduction of discourses and narratives and symbols which when politicised can '[...] drive communal conflicts into a spiral of ethnic cleansing' (Abubakar, 2010: 71). In other words, '[...] because ethnicity is socially constructed, it is not a static concept, but rather dynamic, as it is constantly mutating and is reconstructed over time' (Francis, 2006: 77). As such, for constructivists, ethnicity is understood as without any 'objective reality' (Francis, 2006: 80). Identity claims must be unpacked, therefore, to reveal the underlying security issues for which they serve as a medium. Dorman et al. (2007: 6) suggest that 'While material resources – access

to land, opportunities and jobs – are often at stake, these conflicts are potent and meaningful for their constituents because they are framed and understood in terms of identity and belonging'. Beyond examining the 'decisive ruptures' of the colonial era, it is also necessary to understand identity as being '[...] in a constant process of mutation from the nineteenth century down to the present' Dorman et al. (2007: 6), acknowledging that the very malleability of identities allows room for negotiations between rival actors and 'culture brokers' (Dorman 2010: 7).

Thus, within the confines of the postcolonial nation-states, rather than in and of itself constituting the basis for conflict, identity has served as a means for disadvantaged populations to pursue their protective needs, for a patronage-based repartition of resources, and as a basis for upholding regime power and national boundaries. After independence, African leaders proved unable or unwilling to forge 'unity in diversity' out of the 'pre-existing, nations and component identities' within their borders (Deng 2008: 64). Perceived as a source of insecurity and a threat, diversity was countered through the imposition of a homogenous national identity and one-party authoritarianism which prevented the advancement of the pan-African ideals that might have opened the way to alternative forms of representation, governance and political organisation (Deng, 2008: 64). As it were, in 1964 the newly created OAU established the 'inviolability of the colonial borders' (Deng, 2008: 65). The rejection of any loosening of the bondage of boundaries removed any immediate prospects of continental discussions which might have addressed and pre-empted the appearance of the 'northern problem'. Clapham (1996: 35) states that notions of identity in postcolonial states found themselves locked into, and subsumed to, the competing logics of national security, regime security and communal security, resulting in an uneasy balancing of pre-colonial identities and the nationalism of the nation-state and pan-Africanism.

COLONIALISM AND IDENTITY

The creation of states based on the interests of foreign powers united some ethnic communities while dividing others, arguably constituting the 'foremost act of disruption' of the colonial period (Ndulo 2010: 24). Mazrui states that '...the seeds of the postcolonial wars themselves lie in the sociological mess that the post-Berlin partition created in Africa by destroying ancient boundaries of identity and old methods of conflict resolution without creating effective substitutes in their place' (Mazrui 2010: xiii). Clapham (1996: 31) suggests that the need to establish boundaries was perceived by the colonising powers as the 'territorial structure' which would enable the orderly repartition of the continent. While some colonial borders did at times reflect the existing power

of African rulers, the prevalence of colonial interests explains the number of small states on the continent, measured by population and/or geographical extension (Francis, 2006: 38). Overall, colonial borders paid scant attention to 'the identity of indigenous states, societies or ecological units', an exercise which at times produced 'an astonishing level of cartographic improbability' (Clapham, 1996: 31).

Prior to colonisation, Africa was characterised by a wide array of socio-political configurations and as such, the colonial disruption more accurately refers to the '[...] the imposition of the Westphalian model of statehood through the colonial project in Africa' (Francis, 2006: 39). As a result of geography and available resources, vast regions possessed little in the sense of 'overarching structure of territorial control'. Forms of governance with 'modern' attributes in areas able to sustain larger populations resulted in 'islands of relatively settled government,' which, however, exercised very variable control over their hinterland; colonial authorities were keen to establish boundaries within these 'fuzzy borderlands' (Clapham 1996: 31).

The variety of socio-political configurations indicates a multiplicity of forms of governance often characterised by multiple allegiances and what Francis (2006: 41–42) calls a 'shared sovereignty.' Contrary to Westphalian security which links state and territory, the traditional understanding of security in Africa revolved around a holistic view of the political, economic ecological, socio-cultural and religious-spiritual domains, which represented both an approach to and means of enabling the performance of the 'functionally-related activities' on which each community depended: defence, the maintenance of the social order necessary to ensure economic livelihood, the imposition of social norms, obligations, and justice, and guarding the balance between these various realms (Abubakar, Omeje and Galadima, 2010: 2–3).

Clapham (1996: 30–31) asserts that social order in sparsely populated areas with limited centralised political authority tended to be regimented by clan, lineage, and conventions, with traditional mechanisms serving as means of regulating competition. Socio-cultural relations emanated from smaller political units centred on the village and a wider tribal allegiance which established boundaries of identity among communities and ethnic groups and a communal homogeneity which precluded having to contend with diversity according to Ndulo (2010: 23–24). Ethnicity was a reflection of a consensual cultural identity, itself 'embedded in shared culture, history, language, and social norms' (Abubakar 2010: 72), which however, did not prevent 'inter-tribal and inter-group' wars from being prominent in pre-colonial Africa (Abubakar, Omeje and Galadima 2010: 2–3).

The colonial state created and super-imposed political identities onto the existing consensual cultural identities. With the colonial state, the boundaries of security shifted from the social and community-based into the domain of

the political. In wresting away sovereignty and the right to the legitimate use of violence, colonial states established regimes of impunity whose enduring legacy has been a characteristic in post-independence Africa. Moreover, the understanding and authority to define security concerns, and the methods and approaches to resolve conflicts, were gradually 'professionalized, secularized, and militarized' as described by Abubakar, Omeje and Galadima (2010: 3–5). This was compounded by the effects of indirect rule, which relied on the maintenance of civil colonial law in urban agglomerations and customary law which Francis (2006: 41) says was 'enforced by native authority which was ethnicised.' Indirect rule often resulted in chosen local authorities acquiring a new level of unchecked power and the creation of new 'traditional' authority figures. It also resulted in a clear cultural and economic divide between urban colonial centres and their extensive periphery, home to the majority of the population and subject to customary law, thus separating the traditional from the modern (Nduno 2010: 25). Mechanisms such as census-taking, cartography, taxation and ethnography established categories which linked identity to territory, using religion, ethnicity, or territory to establish legal and geographical boundaries in order to divide native from settler (Abubakar 2010: 72–73). In compounding or creating boundaries between communities and advancing and privileging some at the expense of others through territorially-based political identities, '[...]the great crime of colonialism went beyond expropriating the native [...] *The greater crime was to politicize indigeneity*' says Mamdani, quoted in Adebajo (2010: 19 italics in original).

Colonialism at once re-affirmed and brought to the forefront ethnic identities where it made use of these for the purposes of administration and territorial control. Paradoxically, by re-defining the borders, colonialism also created the need to forge the national identity of the populations after independence. For Deng (2008: 65), the postcolonial states consisted of a complex mosaic of ethnic groups 'integrated and often mutually suspicious or antagonistic'. As a result, nation-building '[...] both implicitly and explicitly shaped assumptions about how members of the nation should live, behave and identify themselves'. Times of crisis unleash the more strident manifestations of the 'exclusionary tendencies' of nation-building in a process of 'making nations by creating strangers' (Dorman 2008: 8). As Clapham (1996: 46) points out '[...] what matters is not so much the nature of the frontiers themselves, as the nature of the states which those frontiers are used to define.' In some cases states preceded the creation of territory where boundaries had gradually emerged to demarcate traditional areas of control while in others, territories were demarcated without the presence of a pre-existing idea of the state, lending all the more importance to legitimising the new frontiers. Postcolonial states themselves legitimised their existence by appealing to political divisions created under colonial rule. Katanga, Togoland, Biafra, Southern Sudan and Eritrea

were colonial multi-ethnic entities created by the dictates of colonial governance and their pursuit of independence was at least partially based on the same 'colonial' arguments which upheld the claims of other states; and in so doing '[...]rendered illegitimate the assumption – which had for example, assumed overriding importance in the idea of European statehood – that peoples with a common language, culture and historical identity were entitled to be governed as part of a single state and that international frontiers should be demarcated in order to allow for this' (Clapham 1996: 49).

THE FAILURES AND POSSIBILITIES OF PAN-AFRICAN IDENTITY

The contradictions stemming from the preservation of the Westphalian state system in postcolonial Africa and the pan-Africanist principles of unity, solidarity, and collaboration of African peoples, resulted in what Jinadu (2008: 26) terms a 'raging problematic relationship.' As the African liberation movements began to grow at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, these movements were inspired by the principles of unity and solidarity. Pan-Africanism first sought to liberate African countries from colonialism while setting the foundation for African unity. The impact of Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) fuelled the idea of 'one identity on one continent' among the African diasporas and in Africa (Christian 2008: 322). As a movement, pan-Africanism was institutionalised at the Congress on Africa in Chicago in 1893 and through the creation of the African Association in London in 1897. (Murithi 2005: 22–23). The London Conference of 1897 saw the birth of the Pan-African Association (PAA), whose objective was to improve the relationship between Europe and Africa, encourage cooperation between Africans, and address the miserable conditions of Africans in America and Europe (Murithi 2005: 22–23).

The creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 to represent Africans internationally as one community was a major achievement in terms of cooperation, security, economic development, political integration, and also towards achieving national independence (Makinda and Okumu 2008: 11). Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, argued in defence of African unity as an expression of solidarity and cooperation among African leaders and societies. Nkrumah addressed the African Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 24 May 1963 arguing that 'There is hardly any African state without a frontier problem with its adjacent neighbours [...] but let me suggest that this fatal relic of colonialism will drive us to war against other... unless we succeed in arresting the danger through mutual understanding on fundamental issues and through African unity' (Murithi 2005: 13).

From the onset, however, disagreements persisted about the function and mandates of the organisation. Proponents of closer political unification and integration were opposed by the nationalists, with unionists advocating a total eradication of the colonial boundaries in favour of a unified political body for Africans claim (Makinda and Okumu). Makinda and Okumu assert that this early and evident manifestation of the 'raging problematic relationship' contributed to the failure of the OAU in three key areas: the inability to produce effective national policies for the continent; the incapacity to monitor the internal behaviour of heads of states with regards to transparency and democratisation; and powerlessness and unwillingness at preventing human rights violation and atrocities against the populations they governed (Makinda and Okumu 2008: 26–27). Arguably, the failures of the OAU were rooted in its Charter's founding first principles, devoted to the protection of state sovereignty rather than unity (Amoo 1993: 424). Heads of state have been reluctant to challenge these principles, which have partly served as a mechanism to protect their power and authority. Rather, the exploitation of nationalism and sovereignty and the manipulation of ethnic identities to maintain power, divide opposition, and undermine rival states, often ran contrary to aspirations of a more unified African identity.

With independence, African leaders and the states they governed gained entry into a state system resistant to change and favouring preservation of the colonial order. Roberts (2010: 11) states that, 'Despite a miserable record in its self-appointed role of managing the affairs of the world, its [the Westphalian state system] authority has become so deeply institutionalized over the intervening centuries that its legitimacy is profoundly resilient to challenge'. The failure to expand the conceptual borders of sovereignty and forge unity in diversity finds expression in the persistent dilemma of adequately reconciling local, communal and national identities and security concerns while establishing effective continental mechanisms drawing legitimacy from pan-Africanism and a pan-African identity, in order to effectively protect and safeguard citizens across borders. It is in this sense that 'securing' a pan-African identity may be linked to the advancement of Africa's human security.

HUMAN SECURITY AND IDENTITY

The human security paradigm adds a new dimension to traditional security by focusing on the human being rather than the state. Whereas traditional security is state-centric and concerned primarily with interstate security, the protection of borders and sovereignty, with human security, Francis (2005: 16) explains, '[...] non-military/non-traditional threats to security have led to the broadening of the reference object of security to include individuals, non-state

actors and sub-national groups.' This has profound implications in many Africa states, where the interpretation of security as inherited from the colonial order and based on the protection of national sovereignty, has often been conflated with regime survival and exclusionary policies against the marginalised 'Other' as Abubakar (2010: 81) further expands.

At a minimum, human security can be conceived of what Bosold and Werthes (2005: 86) term, '[...] as protection from physical violence and adherence to the law in respect of basic human rights, above all the right to life', with echoes of Carl Schmitt's (2007) idea of the protection of life as the ultimate reason of the state. According to the *United Nations Development Program Report of 1994* (UNDP 1994) human security '[...] emphasizes the welfare of ordinary people, maintains basic human rights and the realization of human potential' According to Roland Paris (2001), the broadening of security consists of its enlargement to include non-military threats such as environmental scarcity and the spread of diseases, while the deepening of security is made manifest in its focus on the basic security of individuals and groups.

More expansively, human security also considers that individual human beings should be free from want as well as from fear. The UNDP Report of 1994 identified seven components that comprise human security: economic security (e.g. freedom from poverty); food security (e.g. access to food); health security (e.g. access to health care and protection from disease); environmental security (e.g. protection from such dangers as environmental pollution and depletion); personal security (e.g. physical safety from such things as torture, war, criminal attacks, domestic violence, drug use, suicide, and even traffic accidents); community security (e.g. survival of traditional cultures and ethnic groups as well as the physical security of these groups); and political security (e.g. enjoyment of civil and political rights, and freedom from political oppression) (UNDP 1994; Paris 2001: 90).

The concept of human security has resonated in Africa, where appeals for an expanded understanding of security pre-date 1994. In 1992, the African Leadership Forum stated that '[...] the concept of security goes beyond military consideration; it embraces all aspects of society including economic, political and social dimensions of individual, family, community, local and national life' (African Leadership Forum 1992: 9). It has been argued that the concept of human security reflects traditional perceptions of security in Africa. As Gani Yoroms notes:

[I]n Africa an individual cannot claim to be secure if the community is not. Therefore, what is invoked in Africa is community security. In Africa you move from the whole to the particular and not the other way round. In most African societies the noun 'human' is singular and connotes an individual. When it is put in context of collectivity it becomes a community. Therefore, the security of

the individual as a human being is incomplete without that of the society. Community security therefore, means the safety of the people and their environment. So that an individual, wherever he is, he is not alone. He is a moving community. In short, if an individual has his security without that of the people he will be like an oasis in the desert that has no impact on the desert (Yoroms 2005: 48).

The concept of human security offers African states both possibilities and perils in their efforts to confront the 'northern problem' by providing a framework for identifying the root causes of conflict and laying the groundwork for a reconciliation of, and constant peaceful re-negotiation of, competing visions of security. Roberts (2010: 16) states that:

Human security marks a departure from how we normally think about global security in terms of the state, of sovereign territory, of civil and ethnic conflict, of anti-state terrorism, of nuclear weapons and other such obvious challenges to state security, and in terms of the institutions of the state used to address such threat.

This departure, however, is contingent on the acceptance of a wider definition of human security and impervious to '[...] defining and limiting its potency to civil wars and civilian casualties as the consequences of political violence' according to Roberts (2010: 16), who further states that security issues must consider '[...] the billions whose lives are rendered insecure by a range of conditions which mainstream security ignores, but which are matters of security to everyday existence of those people's lives.'

Human security issues are considered outside the scope of traditional realist security which '[...] consciously selects the other matters it defines labels and prioritizes as security' (Roberts 2010: 12). For Roberts (2010: 13), '[...] it is difficult to sidestep the conclusion that those who have secured themselves from indirect violence prioritize security threats according to their remaining insecurities.' As a result, human security is at risk of being co-opted by traditional and narrow security concerns, either through the merging of security and development, whereby powerful state interests dictate development and aid according to their own perceptions of a threatening global South, or by extending narrow human security concerns into the practices of peace-building interventions (Roberts 2010: 19). The image of a threatening South deflects attention from the structural causes which underlie many of the so-called identity conflicts and reflects a discourse which reduces African societies to primitive, violent and irrational as Francis (2006: 79) explained, saying 'What may superficially appear as "ethnic conflict" is in reality a complex conflict rooted in the political, socio-economic and historical context of the polity.' This discourse fails to acknowledge the poverty and exclusion which create the en-

vironment for the exploitation of ethnicity as a channel for grievances (Francis 2006: 79).

Roberts (2011: 71) further states that, the institutions of global governance largely determine the economic norms which 'aggravate postcolonial asymmetries of relative power and prosperity,' a process which is reinforced by presenting particular interpretations of economics and human nature as indisputable universal scientific truths. As Clapham (2006) has demonstrated, for a number of structural reasons, African states are inordinately dependent on the various organisations and institutions that make up the networks of global governance. The peril of human security is that it may serve to legitimise 'calculated bio-political mismanagement' whereby global governance and market forces assume the control of regulatory functions, historically assumed by governments over a national territory, over much of the world's poorer population (Roberts 2010: 26).

Addressing the northern problem in African states requires recognition of how the interaction of global forces, regional power struggles between states and concerns for elite and regime security within states all converge in their impact on the 'human' security of populations. Confronted with marginalisation and exclusion from one or any combination of these factors, the refuge of narrow and rigid identities may appear to further the chances of securing well-being or protecting status. Dorman et al. (2007: 8) explain, 'As these pressures increase citizens seek, and are encouraged to rally around a national identity which retrenches the benefits of the state against the external hordes'. In and of itself, the creation of new states is unlikely to provide an antidote to new 'northern problems' so long as populations remain subject to 'bio-political' control and are marginalised by rival groups and elites.

The absence of social welfare or basic services such as water and electricity in the global South has meant that global governance and market forces have acquired a non-territorial 'bio-political' function to facilitate, ration, condition or prevent access to life-sustaining services and necessities. For Roberts (2010: 23–25) this amounts to a 'calculated bio-political mismanagement' resulting in 'bio-life' in the North and 'bio-poverty' in the South. The view of Mitchell (2011: 9) is that this 'colonising effect' is often not perceived as such as long as direct violent conflict abides and a limited 'freedom from conflict' is attained. From this perspective, the rise of neo-liberalism within the structures of global governance is leading most of the world's population to poverty given that from Roberts' (2010: 5) perspective, '[...] its essence underscores most global problems because of its individualist emphasis in a world whose survival depends upon pan-national communal cooperation.'

Under the guise of development and security, what is presented as a solution to underdevelopment and conflict runs contrary to traditional notions of community and group security and its functional basis in ensuring that communal

needs are met. This is evidenced by the fact that where the state is incapable, unable or unwilling to provide basic services and market forces provide to only a wealthier fraction of the population, the community is essential to countering the effects of 'bio-poverty' as stated by Roberts (2010: 24–25). Yet even at the community level of everyday life, Mitchell (2011: 8) draws attention to the risk that:

[E]veryday life may become instrumentalised to the logics of production and consumption, or other norms of modernity. A range of logics or 'overarching strategies of power' – including the quantification or objectification of human beings, dynamics of self-regulation, production and the radicalisation of symbols or communicative praxis – may be extended into the realm of the everyday, often by the means of modernising processes.

Securing the everyday may thus be an avenue towards the peaceful protection of communal identities and a re-focusing of security issues which, by meeting needs as defined locally, can reduce the pressures and tensions which translate into violent competition between ethnic groups or communities.

Drawing on the work of Elise Boulding, Mitchell suggests that peace is closely related to '[...] socialisation and the physical enactment of practices associated with caring, interpersonal exchange and social formation, including that of identity-based or 'communal' groups on a small scale' (Mitchell 2011: 7). While interpretations of the concept of identity crisis vary considerably, an expansive interpretation may be deemed to include the notion of 'confusion' identity. For Hoover, Marcia and Parris (1997: 3) an identity crisis occurs when '[...] not knowing who we are consists of confusion within, as well as suspicion without.' A secure identity for Mitchell (2011: 2) is constructed communally through the 'everyday, that is, [...] the set of experiences, practices and interpretations through which people engage with the daily challenges of occupying, preserving, altering and sustaining the plural worlds they occupy [...] the unique spaces in which human groups create and sustain their collective lives, interacting with their material environment.'

Mitchell (2011: 20) believes that '[...] the contexts generally defined as 'conflict zones' or 'societies in conflict' are those in which 'conflictual forms of world-building are significant or even predominant within everyday life.' The everyday can provide both the situational and instrumental contexts of identity: '[...] the context in which a person finds herself [himself] does more than simply provide a perceptual frame that subconsciously shapes the person's way of thinking about who she [he] is, but also the choices he [she] makes about which identities will serve her [him] best' (Posner 2005: 11). It is worth quoting Mitchell at length:

In any polity in which plural worlds coexist, the acts through which they are built, preserved and altered frequently collide with those of other groups and create radical threats. The threats raised by this form of pluralisation may be reacted to with hostility or even aggression, but may also be greeted by responses ranging from simple toleration to active engagement. Some of these responses may be undesirable and reactionary, whilst others may be creative and progressive, but all constitute means of responding to, resisting and coping with threat (Mitchell 2011: 20).

Similarly, L. Adele Jinadu situates 'ethnic' individuals within perpetually changing 'fields and networks of social relations' in which they '[...] strategically [...] assume multiple identities' (Jinadu 2007: 12). Posner (2005: 110) asserts that personal and group ethnic identity is '[...] fluid and situation bound...rather than being hard-wired with a single ethnic identity, individuals possess repertoires of identities whose relevance wax and wane with changes in context.' In order to account for this, it has been suggested by Oliver Richmond in Roberts (2011: 3) that peace-building should be based on '[...] the interests, identities, and needs of all actors, state and non-state through the creation of a discursive framework of mutual accommodation and social justice which recognises difference.' While states may be positioned to host this discursive framework, its very nature implies a:

[...] post-Westphalian' understanding in which peace '[...] is not necessarily contingent on sovereign territoriality, does not necessarily privilege the traditional organs and priorities of modern state-building, and involves a wider range of ordinary people in the shaping of a more positive and far-reaching peace that reflects their needs and priorities, in whatever peaceful form this takes' (Roberts 2011: 3).

A human security framework which recognises the 'insecurity' of plural worlds of co-existing communal identities may help towards creating a peace that is led by local actors, responsive to local needs, and according to Richmond avoids the imposition of 'governmentality' whereby '[...] top-down or external control takes over most, political, social, economic and identity functions of groups involved in conflict and in the construction of peace at the level of civil society' (2011: 48).

Accomplishing this would require coordinated and mutually reinforcing efforts on several levels, from the local to the national, regional, and continental, which would aim at the recognition of diverse identities by focusing on their expression as a variety of needs which at times are conflicting. In a post-Westphalian African continental order in which national identity would be but one component, a strong pan-African identity would favour a greater role for the

continent on the world stage, one that would be less undermined by competing national interests. Strong regional identities could collectively strengthen individual state and national components by, for instance providing a constructive space for the management of borders and movements of people, while the national sphere could provide a space for the negotiation of national identities by supporting local mechanisms for the resolution of disputes with the aim of achieving consensus on the prioritising of competing needs. As Dorman et al. (2007: 9) argue, the creation of a national identity is linked to the 'boundaries of inclusion and exclusion both above and below the level of the state' and identity emerges as a focal point when certain groups are marginalised on the basis of ethno-cultural differences. In this sense, ethnicity and nationalism should not be conflated. Overall, Young explains:

[...] with relatively few exceptions, ethnicity does not mutate into ethno-nationalism. The crucial difference between ethnicity and nationalism as forms of solidarity is the nature of the political aim arising from the identity. Nationalism is married to the doctrine of self-determination; ethnicity is joined to the cultural self-preservation. In Africa, ethnicity in the political realm is – to repeat – above all mobilised by issues of domination and distribution, relative shares within a polity rather separation from it (Young, 2007: 252).

The political management of difference is crucial: 'It is inevitable that Africa's states will struggle with political, ethnic and linguistic cleavages, yet it is what politicians do with those cleavages that matters' say Dorman et al. (2007: 9).

Against this background, we examine the concept of 'popular peace' a framework for moving locally-defined needs towards the centre of the political arena within a wider human security agenda, with the recognition of diversity as a means of reducing the appeal of ethnicity as a violent mobilising factor. For Roberts (2011: 9):

Popular peace is the peace that results from the mobilisation of the resources to address everyday needs, as defined by substantial tranches of local people, rather than by hegemonic fiat. It lays the framework for the durable protection and provision of diverse and essential everyday needs, directing and engaging formal and informal actors and institutions at local and global levels.

Roberts suggests the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as an example and possible starting point; and while recognising that this may not be the need expressed by all, nonetheless, 'it is needed by everyone' and '[...] cuts across all identities and gender, providing some foundations for the crucial social contract upon which stability rests' (Roberts 2011: 17).

The potential strengthening of national governmental legitimacy through involvement as provider or facilitator of the resources required to meet the needs expressed by local populations is a key element of popular peace. But while advocating that 'At the national level, global governance bodies could support formal institutionalisation of WASH through State bodies for nationwide delivery over the long term,' he also warns against top-down metropolitan state-centrism and elite manipulation '[...] which invigorate parallel informal practices in everyday lives' (Roberts 2011: 12). He suggests the possibility of '[...] tying the provision of political institution-building in metropolitan centres to the successful establishment of broader-reaching social bodies across the country' (Roberts 2011:13). Moreover, there must also be a willingness to look beyond the state to informal actors with local legitimacy 'The formal State is not the be all and end all of all peace building' (Roberts 2011: 14).

The external support would be determined by what Roberts (2011: 16) calls 'the gap between what people have and what they need'. Support may be provided by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and small scale investment in order to mobilise local resources and resourcefulness, encouraging and engaging local business in the process. Local needs would be communicated through various forms of community-based or provincial-based organisations, such as the Councils of Elders in Somalia. The use of technology would be widely facilitated and promoted to allow communities to communicate their needs to responsible authorities, who would monitor the process to ensure its inclusiveness and provide incentives for its fulfilment. For Roberts (2011: 17), 'In moving towards policy enablement that impacts constructively on everyday life, global actors might also evolve the relationship between society and state that lies at the heart of the social contract, local legitimacy and political stability'.

While recognising that studies on popular peace are in short supply and that more research is required, it would appear that in Africa the role of the Councils of Elders in Somalia encompasses some of the key elements of popular peace, already informally active and which have provided legitimacy and stability according to Roberts (2011: 18). And while the framework for popular peace was developed for application in post-conflict peace-building, we suggest it is worthwhile exploring its applicability in a wider context for its focus on the agency of local populations and its potential to include the recognition of difference in the determination of needs and the achievement of commonly established and negotiated local priorities.

The approach also has the virtue of allowing for the participation of various levels of authority in a sort of bi-directional continuum. While careful to avoid the pitfalls of a top-down approach, a continental framework for popular peace could nonetheless be driven locally while being vigorously championed by the

AU as part of a human security agenda; coordinated and supported by regional organisations of states, and implemented by national authorities accountable both upwards to regional and continental bodies, and downwards locally. This diffusion of authority, a kind of re-configuration of the borders and boundaries, would appear to correspond to the 'insecure' reality of African states enclosed in the Westphalian model: As Nduno (2010: 28) concludes in his discussion of the prospects of constitutional democracy in Africa, 'Constitutional democracy in Africa will inevitably involve multiple or concurrent constitutional orders rather than a single centre of authority and power, especially as African countries are characterized by large territory, multi-ethnic groupings, high rates of illiteracy, and poor communications infrastructure'.

It has been noted that insurgencies are significantly lower in countries where a government is as Nduno (2010: 21) explains, 'inclusive, democratic, strong, effective and provides basic social and economic needs of its people.' For Richmond (2011: 51) achieving this will remain elusive so long as conflicts based on 'social justice, self-determination or a fairer distribution of resources' are met by a response which seeks to impose a model which dismisses '[...] local contextual forms of agency, politics, society, cultures, identity and economics'. Human security as a framework for policymaking to address the northern problem should seek '[...] to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment and to empower them to act on their own behalf' according to Chandler and Hynek (2011: 5).

CONCLUSION

In order to find a meaningful policy expression, the collective meaning of human security in Africa should be grounded in the recognition of an African identity united by and in diversity, combined with a determination at all levels to meet the needs of its populations, within and across borders and boundaries. The simultaneous and mutually reinforcing transformations of traditional notions of identity and security in postcolonial Africa have produced competing and conflicting visions of state-centric and community-based security. It is arguably at the level of the everyday that a wider understanding of human security offers the possibility of addressing the 'northern problem' by recognising the diversity of African societies and returning security to its original holistic understanding and functional purpose.

Rather than diverting efforts to securing borders and forging a national identity from above, human security may allow for a local and community-based determination of security issues and the emergence of local solutions which reflect, recognise and compose with the insecurities generated by the presence

of a co-existing plurality of groups. Beyond the bondage of boundaries, a continental recognition, and the even embracing of, the insecurity of diversity could lead to a defiance of the rigidity of national-territorial state security concepts and clear the way for peaceful solutions to security issues in Africa.

State-building, conflict and global war on terror in the Horn of Africa

Redie Bereketeab

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the interconnection between state, conflicts and global war on terrorism in the engendering of the extremely volatile situation in the Horn of Africa (HOA). The HOA comprising Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti has been the most conflict-ridden region on the continent for the last 50 years or so. The recent expressions of the conflicts ravaging the region are manifested as intra-state conflicts: in the second Sudanese North-South civil war, 1983 to 2005, and the Darfur one (Johnson 2003, Deng 2010, Barltrop 2011); and inter-state: the 1998 to 2000 Ethiopia-Eritrea war (Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut 2004, Negash and Tronvoll 2000, Abbink 2003, Lata 2003). The war on terror has also gripped the region since 9/11, essentially drawn by two factors related to the collapse of Somali state and the emergence of Al Shebab, and the escalation of piracy off the coast of Somalia, since 2003 (Sörenson 2008).

Underlying factors for the rampant conflicts ravaging the HOA include historical, socio-economic, external intervention and environmental challenges. The festering conflicts could be divided into two groups; namely inter-state and intra-state. The inter-state and intra-state conflicts have been further compounded by combinations of regional and international interventions. Undoubtedly such interventions have been driven by competing national interests and international economic, political, security, strategic factors linked to the war on terror and the international concerns related to acts of piracy. Recurrent international interventions therefore in some ways have contributed to the intractability of the conflicts and insecurity of the HOA.

Its strategic location makes the HOA extremely vulnerable to external interventions. Its proximity to the highly sensitive region of the Middle East that combines two fatal factors, notably oil and the Arab-Israeli conflict, makes the HOA highly prone to international attention and intervention. In addition, Bal el-Mandeb and the Red Sea is the main shipping line for goods from the Middle East and far East to Europe and the Americas. According to Sörenson (2008: 8)

every year about 3.3 million barrels of oil, 16 000 vessels pass through the Bab el-Mandeb. The availability of natural resources in the HOA, highly coveted by transnational corporations and states, makes the region strategically interesting to external actors too. As mentioned earlier, the global war on terror and the recent explosion of piracy off the shores of Somalia have also induced virtually all global naval forces, to converge in the HOA. This convergence of naval forces was facilitated by the UN Security Council resolution, Murphy elaborates (2011: 129) that 'from mid-2008 onwards vessels from the United States of America (US), United Kingdom (UK), France, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands, and Pakistan began to undertake operations.'

The above factors feed into the crisis of the state that has become the characteristic feature of the HOA. Conversely the crisis of the state also feeds into the festering conflicts and insecurities of the region. These interrelated factors require further scientific and critical analysis in order to establish the nature of the dynamics of the conflicts and its regional implications. Scholars, policy-makers, and concerned actors would therefore be expected, through scientific and critical, context-sensitive studies, and through regional outlook, to make concerted and rigorous efforts to find possible solutions to these rather rampant and intractable conflicts, insecurities and state crisis.

INTRA-STATE AND INTER-STATE CONFLICTS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Rampant conflicts have been ravaging the Horn of Africa (HOA) for the last 50 years (Cliffe 2004:151). Ostensibly the conflicts could be divided into three groups: (i) inter-state (state-state), and (ii) intra-state (state-society), (iii) society-society (communal) (McGinnis 1999). While intra-state conflicts relate to civil wars, inter-state deal with conflicts between sovereign states (Zezele 2008:6–7; Sarkees et al., 2003: 59). The society-society conflicts relate to communal fighting (intra-communal and inter-communal) (Mengisteab 2011: 16). Intra-communal conflict pertains to a conflict within the same community whereas inter-communal pertains to conflict between two or more communities. The common feature for all the conflicts is that at the bottom-line of it lies the state (Azarya 1988, Young 1994, Englebert 2000). A fragile state in the HOA has become sources of festering conflicts and insecurities.

Generally, conflicts are discerned into two groups. They are violent and non-violent. Moreover, conflicts could be classified into five types: latent conflicts, manifest conflicts, crisis, severe crisis and war. The first two types are categorised as non-violent, while the rest fit into the violent genre according to Axt et al., 2006. War, hence, is a violent conflict. The conflicts ravaging the HOA would then constitute violent and non-violent types. Another definitional distinction of intra-state and inter-state conflicts is the political status of com-

batants. Where combatants are accepted members of the international state system the conflict is classified as inter-state; where the conflict arises from within a member of the international state system it is considered as intra-state, explains Sarkees et al., 2003: 59. The HOA has been suffering of these festering inter-state and intra-state conflicts (Cliffée 2004: 151).

In identifying reasons for these festering conflicts we could arrive at a variety of factors. To account for the most obvious ones: (i) Livelihood-based resources: water, land, grazing, pasture (Tvedt 1993); (ii) culture: language, ethnicity, religion (Singer 1996; Smith 2004); (iii) political: power, inequality, domination, discrimination, marginalisation and alienation (Horowitz 1985; Gurr 1970); (iv) external intervention: colonial, Cold War, regional, war on terror and piracy (Pfetsch and Rohloff 2000; Woodward 2004; Möller 2008; Samatar 2008); (v) socio-economic: poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, draught, underdevelopment, environmental degradation (Zezeza 2008); (vi) mode of life: peasantry, sedentary, pastoral, nomadic, highland, lowland (Ahmed and Menger 2006); (vii) dysfunctional governance practices: deficit of democracy, accountability, transparency, tyranny, dictatorship, sham and unrepresentative electoral practices, alienation and marginalisation of local indigenous institutions and practices (Harir and Tvedt 1994; Kidane 2011). These diversities characterising the HOA render conflicts highly complex, difficult to analyse and understand, definitely persevering to resolve.

Presumably a conflation and configuration of a number or all of the above factors would constitute the causalities of the festering conflicts in the HOA. Space will not allow us to deal with the rampant and complex conflicts in detail. Hence I will attempt to provide a cursory analysis. I will begin with intra-state conflicts and then proceed with inter-state conflicts.

INTRA-STATE CONFLICTS

Perhaps Sudan was the first country to be exposed to the complex and overlapping intra-state and inter-state conflicts. Widespread marginalisation, alienation and discrimination of those in the periphery by the centre, immersed Sudan in an unending conflict that began on the eve of its independence, in 1956 (Bartrop 2011; Deng 2010; Ahmed 2010; Grawert 2010; Johnson 2003). The longest dimension of the Sudanese intra-state conflicts relates to the south-north divide. The conflict in Sudan had both the characteristics of society-society and intra-state. It had the form of society-society nature because it was between 'African-Christian-animists' (South) and 'Arab-Moslems' (North). It also assumed an intra-state form because the state was controlled by the 'Arab-Moslem' elite that placed it in the position of waging war against certain sections of society.

As early as on the eve of independence, the first intra-state conflict in Sudan broke out. The mutiny of a Southern unit in the Sudanese Army, in Torit, Equatoria, in 1955, marked the inception of the first civil war (Ahmed 2010: 4; Rolandsen 2005: 24; Johnson 2003; Harir and Tvedt 1994; Ariel 1992). Following the Addis Ababa Accord of 1972, which gave the South an autonomous self-rule, leaving questions of whether the 17-year-old war could be resolved. Nevertheless, 10 years later, self-rule was abolished by President Ghaffar al Nimeiri. The abolition of self-rule coupled with introduction of Sharia law in the country triggered the commencement of the second civil war in 1983 (Johnson 2003; Deng 2010).

Then on 9 January 2005 the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the South Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the second civil war (Ahmed 2008; Deng 2010; Grawert 2010). The prime provision of the CPA dealt with the right of the people of south Sudan to determine their future through holding a referendum. The referendum was held from 9 to 15 January 2011 with the outcome of a clear endorsement to secession. In accordance with the provisions of the CPA and the positive outcome of the January 2011 referendum, South Sudan formally emerged as a sovereign state on 9 July 2011.

Although the CPA placed responsibility upon the parties to make unity attractive, both parties failed to make efforts necessary for sustainable unity. It is also clear that the seeds for secession of the South were embedded in the provisions of the CPA itself. The CPA was constituted in a way that allows the SPLM/A to represent the people of the South and the NCP to represent the rest of the population, therefore the idea of a New Sudan, it would seem, was rendered to be a negotiation tactic for the SPLM/A to achieve its objectives. The peace brokers, particularly, the US also seemed to have favoured separation of the South. Practically the problems of the Sudan were reduced to the North-South dichotomy in the CPA provisions thereby making the Agreement deficient. What perhaps to a certain extent makes the South unique is that it was never properly integrated and the colonial state ruled it separately. Indeed the British ruled the South as part of their East African colonies (El Mahdi 1965; Johnson 2003; Deng 2010).

In the aftermath of independence the postcolonial power holders in Khartoum also failed to take the issue of integration of the South in the emerging nation-state seriously, thus the postcolonial state of Sudan remained dominated by Northern elites. Nevertheless, the post-referendum period faces profound challenges such as border demarcation, wealth sharing, national debt, citizenship and repatriation (Ahmed 2010). The most difficult of all the pending issues to resolve is Abeyei. All this indicates the existence of a strong possibility that these challenges may again plunge the region into inter-state conflict between Sudan and South Sudan.

Ostensibly, the gravest problem Sudan faced since independence was the war in South Sudan. The Sudan also suffers from related intra-state conflicts in the eastern, western and northern parts of the country (Bartrop 2011; Ahmed 2010; Harir and Tvedt 1994). The Beja people, in the east of the country live at the margins and periphery of central power located in Khartoum. The Khartoum-centred power has subjected them to discrimination, exploitation and repression that made the region the most underdeveloped in the country. In response to the emergent unequal power arrangements and in seeking their right place in postcolonial Sudanese state, they formally launched the Beja Congress in 1958 (Young 2007: 11).

Since its formation the Beja Congress has been intermittently involved in the politics of opposition aimed at improving the plight of the Beja people from alienation, marginalisation, underdevelopment and neglect under the northern 'Muslim-Arab' elite domination. Successive leaders in Khartoum banned the Beja Congress yet it kept re-emerging (Ahmed and Manger 2009; Young 2007). By the early 1990s the conflict developed into a full blown war between the NCP and the Eastern Front (a coalition of Beja Congress and the Rasha-ida Free Lions) (Ahmed and Manger 2009: 8). Until the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) was signed in October 2006, the Eastern Front carried out several operations in eastern Sudan, says Bartrop (2011: 6). The ESPA allowed the Eastern Front to join the GNU. After joining the GNU, however, the Eastern Front was disintegrated into four factions.

When South Sudan seemed close to attaining a final solution, the Darfur conflict erupted. In 2003 a rebel group took arms against the government in Khartoum. The NCP government unleashed, through its supporters of a militia known as the Janjeweed, systematic attacks that turned Darfur into hell on earth. As the war progressed, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) took over (Bartrop 2011: 30–35). The rebel movements in Darfur are divided into many groups that include the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM). These groups have so far been unable to formulate a unified objective to face the NCP government. This further complicated the quest for durable solutions to the conflict. The ineffective separate negotiation processes gave way to the Abuja initiative and later the Doha process without culminating so far into lasting resolution.

In many other parts of the country, such as the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile, Kordofan and Nubia low-intensity conflicts have continued to erupt. These further complicated the intra-state conflict in the Sudan. According to the CPA the consultative referendum was supposed to take place in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan (Bartrop 2011; Grawert 2010). Instead Blue Nile and South Kordofan experienced escalation of the conflict in 2012 which almost drew the two Sudans to full-scale war.

Attempts by the various opposition groups to create a unified front against the ruling NCP have been made. The most successful effort came in 1995 when through the Asmara Declaration, northern parties including DUP, UP; the SPLM/A; Beja Congress and others formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The formation of the NDA raised hopes that the NCP could be compelled to change course. Nonetheless the signing of the CPA between the SPLM/A and NCP, effectively put an end to the NDA, since the SPLM/A that was the main military force abandoned the alliance and joined the government in Khartoum. Despite several agreements between the ruling NCP and its opponents: the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) and Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) (Ahmed 2008; Deng 2010; Grawert 2010), in search for peace, Sudan is no closer to peace.

The need to annex Eritrea heralded Ethiopia's first intra-state conflict. The UN sponsored federal arrangement of 1952 to 1962 was from day one exposed to systematic violations. Over the decade the federation lasted, its pillars were taken apart, one by one inducing serious political grievances among Eritreans leading to intra-state war that commenced in September 1961. The Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict is sometimes classified as inter-state conflict, since Eritrea was perceived as a colonially created autonomous state (Mengisteab 2010).

The annexation of the Italian colony of Eritrea in 1962 by Ethiopia put the final nail on the coffin, triggering a long liberation war in Eritrea which ended in 1991 with the fall of the military regime (Habte Selassie 1980; Gebre-Medhin 1989; Iyob 1995; Bereketeab 2007). In addition to the war for independence in Eritrea, by the 1970s several ethnic movements such as the Oromos, the Somalis, and Tigrayans in their pursuit for equity in the imperial state of Ethiopia, also joined the intra-state conflicts in Ethiopia. Non-ethnic groups informed by leftist ideologies also joined the struggle against the central state (Zewde 2010; Berhe 2009).

Following the fall of the monarchy in February 1974, political tensions in Ethiopia further gained momentum. The ascendance of the Military Junta (commonly known as Dergue: committee in Amharic) to power set in motion the proliferation of liberation movements seeking to transform the Ethiopian state. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) formed on 18 February 1975 in contrast to the Eritreans had no clearly defined objectives (Berhe 2009: 38). The TPLF hosted, at least, covertly the idea of establishing a democratic republic of Tigray. It was only when it became clear that the Dergue's time in power was waning that it decided to broaden its struggle. It then played a dominant role in the creation of a multi-ethnic coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolution Democratic Front (EPRDF) formed in 1989 (Spears 2010:74).

The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) formed in 1973 was another ethno-national movement that sought the reconfiguration of the imperial state. The OLF's objectives were the exercise of the right of self-determination leading

to the secession of the Oromo people from Ethiopia. The OLF later became a member of the EPRDF, a coalition that formed the transitional government of Ethiopia in 1991. Due to fundamental policy difference with the TPLF the OLF withdrew from the coalition in 1992 and resorted to armed struggle (Markakis 2011: 283–4). Another ethno-national movement formed in 1984 was the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) representing ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia. The ONLF's armed struggle continues to rage to date, its major objective being to achieve the right of self-determination of the ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia (Markakis 2011: 321–3).

Another category of centrifugal forces were the non-ethno-national movements which were primarily offshoots of the student movement inside as well as outside Ethiopia. The two major parties that were configured from the student movement were the Me'ison (All Ethiopia Socialist Movement) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) (Zewde 2010: 8). Bitter rivalry between the Me'ison and EPRP deprived the civic groups from playing a leading role in shaping the post-monarchy polity of the country and allowed the military to hijack the popular uprising.

The Dergue, using Me'ison destroyed EPRP, and later turned its axe on Me'ison itself. What remained of the EPRP sought to fight the Dergue through a protracted guerrilla war. This antagonised the EPRP with the TPLF. The TPLF vanquished the EPRP and as a result the latter was driven to the Sudan in 1978. A faction of the EPRP was reorganised as the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) and returned to Ethiopia as an armed insurgent. The EPDM joined the coalition that formed the EPRDF (Berhe 2009).

The primary concern of ethno-nationalist movements was with marginalisation, alienation, and exclusion of respective ethnic communities, whereas the multi-ethnic movements were concerned with democratisation, distribution of power and resources, and to certain extent on issues of nationalities (Zewde 2010). The struggle of the ethno-nationalists and multi-ethnic forces eventually resulted in change in the political landscape of Ethiopia in 1991. The military regime was overthrown and the liberation movements took power.

A radical restructuring of the Ethiopian state occurred. The triumphant EPRDF carried out major reform of the Ethiopian state. A national conference in 1992 endorsed a National Charter through which the new Ethiopia was to be governed. The main provisions of the Charter dealt with reorganising the state along ethnic identity lines. Hence ethnic federalism was introduced. This ethnic federalism was praised because it was perceived to be a solution to a chronic culture of conflict. Critics, however, warned that an ethnic based federal disposition could lead to disintegration of the Ethiopian state (Teshome and Zohrik 2008; Habtu 2003).

The optimism that the downfall of the Dergue regime would pave a way for harmony among composite ethnic groups in Ethiopia evaporated and another

round of intra-state conflict resumed, perpetuating the culture of war. The hopes that were placed on the ethnic based federal arrangement as an enduring solution to the belligerent ethnic relations began to dissipate rapidly. Indeed the model was praised by its proponents to be a proper solution to the tainted image of the oldest state in Sub-Saharan Africa that was described by some as a 'prison of nations' (Gudina 2003; Berhe 2009).

The Charter that was supposed to constitute the legal basis for the new social contract between the ethnic groups was signed by the movements representing the main ethnic groups: the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM), Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) further encountered considerable legal, political and implementation obstacles. As a result of this, the OLF revisited the jungle in order to achieve their objectives through the barrel of the gun (Markakis 2011: 321). The ONLF also followed suit. Gradually other ethnic movements and supra-ethnic movements resorted to the famous armed liberation struggle too. This turned Ethiopia to a full circle of intra-state wars (Markakis 2011).

Somalia gained its independence on 1 July 1960 as a unity of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland. These two had been unified four days after British Somaliland got its independence on 26 June 1960 to form the Republic of Somalia (Samatar and Samatar 2002: 31). The conditions under which Somalia got its independence however paved the way for intra-state and inter-state conflicts. The precarious integration of the two units – perhaps due to their separate colonial legacies – soon proved to be hazardous to the wellbeing of the emergent Somali state (Ismail 2010; Elmi 2010; Kusow 2004; Lewis 2002).

The clan-based division of postcolonial leaders and parties led to chaos in 1968 and the election of 1969 was therefore marred by turmoil. This gave opportunity to the military junta presided by Gen Siad Barre to stage a coup in October 1969, ending the brief era of multiparty political dispensation. Military dictatorship was compounded by Cold War interventions, geo-regional and clan politics precipitated the collapse of the Somali State in 1991 (Samatar and Samatar 2002; Lewis 2002; Woodward 2004; Möller 2008).

Lethal combinations of clan mobilisation, organisation and arming, engendered the emergence of clan-based armed groups such as the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF, Mijerteen), Somali National Movement (SNM, Isaaq), United Somali Congress (USC, Hawiye) that overthrew the Siad Barre regime in 1991 (Möller 2008: 102–3; Jhazbhay 2008:61). The inter-clan feuds that followed the post-Barre state collapse plunged the Somali people into further intractable intra-society conflict.

The apportioning of Somalia as war loots of the clan-based movements produced the following entities: Somaliland dominated by Isaaq, Puntland dominated by Mijerteen and Central and Southern Somalia dominated by Haw-

iye (Ismial 2010; Möller 2008). An intractable intra-society war, on one hand, extremism, Global War on Terror, regional and international interventions, on the other have rendered the Somali nation a theatre of an unprecedented suffering and destruction. The two break-away regions, and particularly Somaliland, have however established a peaceful, stable and relatively democratic political system.

French Somaliland got its independence in 1977 from France. The territory which in 1967 was renamed Issa and Afar was named Djibouti at independence. The two major ethnic groups of Djibouti are the Issa Somalis and the Afars. Djibouti's independence was also characterised by intra-state conflicts between the majority Somalis and minority Afars. A low-intensity war has been ongoing for decades. The minority Afars felt excluded and discriminated against by the majority Issa and resorted to armed resistance.

In November 1991 the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD), representing the Afar people in Djibouti launched an armed insurgency (Abdallah 2008: 276). A major faction of FRUD signed a power sharing accord with the ruling People's Rally for Progress (RPP) on 26 December 1994. Then a faction led by Ahmed Dini (former Prime Minister, 1977–78) rejected the accord and continued its low-intensity war. The regime of Ismail Omar Guelleh signed a peace agreement with this group on 12 May 2001, thereby ending the decade-long intra-state war. In 2010 the intra-state conflict erupted again (AFP, May 2010). Some connect the reactivation of FRUD with the recent conflict between Djibouti and Eritrea. Nevertheless, Djibouti is, relatively speaking, perceived to be stable in a region where stability is a rare commodity.

Eritrea gained its independence in 1991. It soon also became embroiled in intra-state conflicts. Eritrea represented an example of aborted decolonisation process. It was transferred through a UN sponsored federal decision, from Italian colonial rule to Ethiopian rule in 1952 (Habte Selassie 1989; Gebre-Medhin 1989; Iyob 1995). Ten years of deliberation on how to resolve the destiny of the ex-Italian territory ended in the decision to merge Eritrea and Ethiopia through federation (Pool 1979; Ellingson 1977). The defective federal arrangement was also arbitrarily abrogated in 1962 which led to a 30-year independence struggle that ended in 1991 (Habte Selassie 1989; Iyob 1995; Bereketeab 2007).

During the armed struggle, the liberation movement had to go through two civil wars. The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) fought two internecine wars (1972 to 1974 and 1980 to 1981) that ended with the defeat of the ELF. The several factions of the ELF continued the intra-state conflict from the diaspora until independence. In the post-independence era, several of the ELF factions also pursued their politics of resistance from the diaspora. The outbreak of the second Eritrea-Ethiopia war opened opportunity for different groups mainly based in Ethiopia to intensify the intra-state conflict.

INTER-STATE CONFLICTS

The overlap between intra-state and inter-state conflicts in the HOA is clearly manifested. Intra-state conflicts easily spill-over to inter-state conflicts and vice-versa (Bereketeab 2013). However, the mechanisms through which the overflow takes may vary considerably. The onset of inter-state conflicts in the HOA could be traced back to the 1960s when intra-state conflicts began to ravage the emerging states. Evidently, intra-state conflicts very easily find their ways across the international geo-political boundaries. In other words, they easily spill-over into inter-state conflicts.

The mechanisms of spill-over may assume a range of forms. Migration, border ethnic groups, poorly defined and contested boundaries and proxy wars are some of the factors that facilitate the transfer of intra-state conflicts to inter-state conflicts. In terms of proxy wars, for instance, both Sudan and Ethiopia supported rebel groups of the other country. Sudan gave sanctuary to the Eritrean liberation fighters and other Ethiopian opposition groups; in response, Ethiopia supported Sudanese opposition groups. This way the two countries were locked into inter-state conflicts (Cliffe 2004). It could not be claimed that Ethiopia and Sudan have gone into overt inter-state wars, yet they experienced the longest history of inter-state proxy wars in the HOA, due to their long history of intra-state conflicts. Sudan's intra-state conflict, as was elucidated earlier, began in 1955 while that of Ethiopia began in 1960.

A characteristic feature of the Somali-Ethiopia relationship has most of the time been conflictive. This was mainly due to the presence of Somali ethnic population in Ethiopia. The post-independence Somali nationalist leaders harboured strong ambitions to unite the five units of the Somali nation divided by colonialism. This put them into a collision course with both Kenya and Ethiopia. Somalia went into war with Ethiopia on two occasions, notably in 1964 and 1977 (Möller 2008; Kusow 2004; Lewis 2002).

Therefore the first inter-state war in the HOA took place in 1964 between the emerging postcolonial Somali state and the oldest and established state of Ethiopia. The most serious confrontation, however, was fought from 1977 to 78 where the swift Somali penetration and occupation of south-western Ethiopia could only be halted by the massive Soviet and Cuban involvement (Greenfield 1994: 108; Adam 1994: 118). The crushing defeat of Somalia in this inter-state war heralded the beginning of the collapse of the Somali state in Somalia (Elmi 2010: 92–93).

In her short life-span, Eritrea has been involved in inter-state conflicts with all her neighbours (Reid 2009). The post-liberation Eritrean state was born in a highly volatile and conflict-ridden region, which could explain its political behaviour (ICG 2010). The volatility of the region certainly shaped the conduct of the emerging Eritrean state in a number of ways. Firstly, it induced the new

state to aggressively assert its position in the unstable environment. Secondly, the environment dictated that the international community related to it unfavourably. This unfavourable treatment was clearly manifested in connection with the second Ethiopia-Eritrea war which in turn further shaped political behaviour of the Eritrean state (see Reid 2009; Bolton 2007: 344–8). A border skirmish between Eritrea and Ethiopia led to outright war, for two years from 1998 to 2000 (Negash and Tronvoll 2000; Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut 2004; Bereketeab 2009). Although the border dispute was settled by the Permanent Court of Arbitration verdict on 13 April 2002, peace and normalisation remain distant. Therefore in addition to the real danger of the prevailing ‘no war, no peace’ situation easily turning into an active war situation, it has also given rise to proxy wars. While in terms of the external dimension of proxy wars it is largely believed that Eritrea and Ethiopia have shifted their war to Somalia (Healy 2009), in the internal dimension they are actively involved in supporting opposition groups to destabilise each other (ICG 2008). The war brought considerable suffering to the people of Eritrea. It even threatened the very existence of the Eritrean state.

It could be safely inferred that all the HOA states have been involved in inter-state conflicts with each other at some point. Sudan was engaged in inter-state conflicts with Ethiopia and Eritrea; Ethiopia was involved with Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea; while Eritrea was involved with Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti.

STATE-BUILDING IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The challenges of state-building in Africa in general and the HOA in particular are of a multifaceted nature and impact in crucial ways the wellbeing of the region. The modern state in the HOA, probably with the exception of Ethiopia is the product of European colonialism. Even Ethiopia in its current form was created during the inception of colonialism, through dealings with European powers (Zewde 2001; Rubenson 1976). What does this colonial creation of the state mean to the wellbeing of contemporary societies of the region? How does this reflect on state-society relations? How does this reality affect the rural-urban relation in terms of governance and integration? What does it mean to the current predicament of the state in HOA?

These are some questions of an imperative significance with respect to state-building in the HOA. One of the effects of the colonial creation of the state is its alienation from its socio-economic, politico-cultural and historical settings. Colonial transplantation and postcolonial importation of western institutions, structures and practices into the national polity engendered what Peter Ekeh (1975) called two publics, notably the urban public and rural public. The urban public refers to the realm where the western educated and influenced middle

class dominates, whereas the rural public is dominated by the overwhelming rural population that lead their daily life on the basis of indigenous, traditional institutions, practices and authorities.

The colonial *modus operandi* was to a certain degree replicated in the postcolonial period by the emergent nationalist leaders. In that sense the two publics continued intact in the postcolonial period. The urban public dominated by the middle class, Western influenced elite governs the urban public while the rural public – a space that is occupied by the overwhelming rural populace – is governed by indigenous traditional institutions, authorities and practices. The urban-based modern elite took it for granted to exclusively rule the postcolonial territories. This perception of entitlement to state power stemmed from the logic that European education is superior to traditional knowledge (Ekeh 1975).

This sense of entitlement was fostered in spite of the fact that these elite might not have control of the whole territory (Spears 2010: 13). The social division into urban and rural has given way to separation in governmentality expressed in formality and informality of the governance system. The institutions and authorities that were formal in pre-colonial era were relegated to informality during the colonial and postcolonial periods to informality (Mengisteab 2009). Another effect of the emergence of the two publics is that of the limited interaction of the state with the rural public. The limited penetration of the state in the rural public thus created a system consisting of bi-publics which are virtually worlds apart. This in turn adversely affected state-society relations. Theoretically, state-society relations could be explained by two conceptual notions, notably emancipation and pacification. These two regulatory state-society notions enable us to analyse and explain the predicament of the state in the region.

Emancipation refers to sovereignty of the state in relation to the society. It further means that the state governs society unchallenged by societal groups, it claims and exercises legitimate use of violence. Concretely, emancipation of the state may indicate three things, notably (i) autonomy of state, (ii) state standing above all societal groups, (iii) establishment of state hegemony. There prevails a clear distinction between state and society. Pacification, on the other hand, means (i) society's submission to state hegemony, (ii) voluntary and functional surrender of society, (iii) establishing channels and mechanisms by which society exerts ultimate rule of checks and balances (Callaghy 1984; Young 1994; Chabal and Daloz 1999). However the emergence of the two publics where state penetration of the rural public is constrained could neither facilitate emancipation of state nor pacification of society.

The overall outcome of this is that the state in the HOA is controlled by specific social groups while others challenge its sovereignty and legitimacy, quite often using coercive means. The inability of the state to impose its hegemony on societal groups is compounded by the fact that the societies are multieth-

nic, multi-religious and multilingual, frequently leading to ethnic domination. Where there exists ethnic domination, societal groups are armed in order to bring about social equality and justice thereby, depriving the state of the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence which is the hallmark of the modern state.

In both accounts of state emancipation and society's pacification the HOA scores very low. Somalia is the extreme example. Since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime, the state has simply dissipated forfeiting autonomy, control and its authority over societal groups. Conversely, societal groups have armed themselves, seriously challenging and substituting state hegemony. In other HOA countries we also see societal groups challenging the state coercively, indicating societal pacification and state emancipation are far away from reality. This scenario led to what Goran Hyden (1983: 36) aptly described as the 'context of a state that is suspended in mid-air above society'.

It is understood that 'State building occurs through the penetration and integration of the territorial economy, polity and society and speaks to questions of political authority and effective governance' (Biswas 2002: 182). This conceptualisation of state-building coalesces with the notion of horizontal and vertical integration (Mazrui and Mazrui 1998) where it takes as its point of departure societal integration and state penetration of society, a necessary prerequisite for modern state formation. Nevertheless the limited penetration of the state in the rural public spawns that state control is limited in the HOA. To compensate these functional constraints the state utilises extra violence.

State-building also relates to the issue of legitimacy, both domestic as well as international. While domestic legitimacy refers to citizens conferring voluntarily consent to state rule, international legitimacy is elicited through the international state system conferring recognition and acceptance of the state as a respected sovereign member with legitimate control of its territory. Most of the HOA states elicit their legitimacy from the international body, with high deficit from domestic. Further domestic legitimacy could be gained through popular consent or societal pacification and submission, whereas international or external legitimacy could be elicited through emancipation and autonomy of the state that in turn endows it recognition and acceptance as member of the international state system.

When a state loses domestic and external legitimacy it may likely collapse or fragment. In reference to state formation Shampa Biswas (2002: 183) states that 'fragmentation occurs when the state is no longer (if ever) able to effectively secure consent on this cultural core.' With 'cultural core' Biswas refers to a homogenising singular culture that plays a cohesive role in nation building. In this sense, cultural core refers to the nation rather than to the state, thus fragmentation according to Biswas refers to a nation probably leading to the emergence of new states. The presumption is that the loss of state legitimacy

may lead to fragmentation and eventually state crisis. Institutional approach theory (Lemay-Hebert 2009; Fukuyama 2004; Rotberg 2004) addresses the formation of the state deriving from the development of functional and enduring state institutions, giving state the ability to run its functions and deliver on societal obligations. A fully formed, functioning, and sustainable state is therefore one that has developed a host of institutions and is running according to institutional principles. Instead of being the property of big men, it is governed by institutions and is well institutionalised. In this regards state crisis means institutional crisis.

State crisis in the HOA partly relates to the origin of the state which is further concerned with the precarious nature of state-building. This precariousness stems from the epistemological and ontological origin of the state. This alien ontological origin of the state compounded by historical, economic, political, security and strategic driven external interventions made the state building process in the HOA extremely precarious. Further, the inability of the political elite to bridge the gap between the urban public and rural public, which alienates the state from the overwhelming rural population also generates state crisis. The multi-ethnic composition of the HOA societies also poses challenges to state builders. The intolerance of ethnic minorities, sometimes, even majorities, contributes to state crisis.

Secondly, state crisis also relates to the constant mismanagement of the state by national elites. The postcolonial elites that took over state power failed abysmally in running the state. The obsession with nation building and uniting fractured societies led them to adopt policies and strategies whose consequences became military and one party dictatorship. This gave rise to constant coups and minorities and marginalised groups to go the liberation struggle way to achieve their aspiration – plunging the region into ravaging intra-and inter-state conflicts.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AND ITS IMPLICATION ON STATE-BUILDING AND CONFLICT IN THE HOA

As alluded to above, the HOA has distinguished itself as the most conflict-prone region on the African continent. Concerted efforts to ensure peace, security, stability, democracy and development to the region have not borne fruit. Why have peace, security and development evaded the region? Several factors that include historical, structural; intra-regional and international, economic, political, security and strategic driven interventions could account for this. The most recent phenomenon in the menu of causality factors is the global war on terror (GWT) that succeeded the Cold War intervention where Super power rivalry in previous decades had turned the region into war theatre.

The 1990s saw a gradual increase in terrorist activities in the HOA. The arrival of Osama bin Laden in Sudan who was offered sanctuary by the Islamic government in Khartoum and the emergence of the radical Islamic movement al Ithihad in Ethiopia (Woodward 2004: 472, Möller 2008: 110) raised the attention on the HOA. The bombing of American Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 which was attributed to terrorist cells originating in the HOA put the region in international focus (Woodward 2004: 473; Piombo 2007). The statelessness and lawlessness in Somalia raised fears in the West that the country could be breeding grounds for terrorism (Piombo 2007; Verhoeven 2009). Following the September 11 attack of the US the HOA, particularly Somalia, witnessed a hot pursuit of the Global War on terror (Woodward 2004: 473).

The US war on terror in Somalia escalated with the formation of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT) consisting of Somali warlords in early 2006 under the pay of the US. The CIA brought together the warlords in order to fight the Islamists who they thought were influenced by international terrorists (Möller 2008:111-113; Samatar 2008: 180; Verhoeven 2009: 411). The ARPCT were no match to the Islamic Court Union (ICU) and thus were vanquished by the courts in June 2006 (Menkhaus 2007: 369). Within a short time the ICU brought most of southern Somalia under their control.

The success of the ICU encouraged Ethiopia to invade Somalia, with the backing of the US. As a result of the invasion, the ICU were routed out in December 2006. The Ethiopian occupation that ended in early 2009 caused the death of more than 20 000 people due to fighting between the Ethiopian army and a radical group that replaced the ICU. Ironically, the war on terror driven occupation of Somalia indeed radicalised the youth, al-Shebab, rendering Somalia more susceptible to international terrorism (Menkhaus 2008: 7; Keenan 2010: 35). In fact with the ascendance of al-Shebab, and subsequent flow of international terrorists seemed to have dramatically increased thereby plunging Somalia into further violence and chaos.

The region responded to the emergence of terror activities and threats by forming an IGAD Capacity building Programme against Terrorism (ICPAT) in 2006 which was located in Addis Ababa. An IGAD Security Sector Programme (ISSP) was presumed to replace the ICPAT as it was to be phased out in December 2010. The ISSP would focus on 'terrorism, maritime security, illicit arms control, money laundering, human trafficking and other cross-border organised crimes (Okubo 2010: 12). This programme was considered to be part of the broader security strategy of CEWARN in fighting terrorism and piracy.

The ICPAT's focus includes establishing a regional approach to counter terrorism with a broader international strategy of acting against financing of terrorism; developing operational capacity to counter illegal cross border move-

ments; expanding the capacity to record and share information; ensuring that human rights are protected in counter-terrorism operations and promoting educational programme to enhance public support (IGAD 2008: 3).

In 2003 a new phenomenon further complicating the war on terror emerged off the Somali coast and Gulf of Aden. Ships and fishing boats were attacked by pirates (Sörenson 2008; Murphy 2011). Increasingly piracy became a major problem for international trade since the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden is a major transport lane for international trade trafficking. The threat of piracy to international trade in the Red Sea, through which annually 16 000 vessels pass, was considered very serious (Sörenson 2008: 8). A code of conduct was signed in Djibouti on 30 January 2009 to enhance the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean.

The Agreement was signed by eight coastal countries including Ethiopia and was intended to cover Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the western Indian Ocean (AFP, 30 January 2009). Since piracy posed a serious obstacle to international trade, international naval forces converged on the region. In 2008, 140 foreign vessels were reported to have been attacked by Somali (AFP 30 January 2009). In spite of the convergence of naval forces of practically the whole world, piracy intensified both in terms of frequency and the area it covered.

The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) established a base in Camp Lemonnier, in Djibouti. The CJTF-HOA also served as the focal point for DoD efforts in the region (Piombo 2007). In clear expansion of the global engagement against piracy and terrorism, the CJTF-HOA at Camp Lemonnier was joined by the Japanese Self-Defence (Mejlon 2011). The European Union (EU) also joined the fight by sending a naval force, Somalia Operation Atlanta, to the region (Sörenson 2008: 16).

Perhaps it will be of interest to briefly state the reasons that gave rise to the emergence of piracy in the off-shores of Somalia. Arguably, three factors are provided as underlying causes for the emergence of piracy. The three factors are: (i) illegal fishing by international companies in the Somali waters, fishing vessels from Spain, Denmark, South Korea, etc., were reported of carrying out for years illegal fishing (Sörenson 2008: 15); (ii) dumping of toxic wastes along the Somali coasts; and (iii) the collapse of the Somali state. The last factor is also widely believed to have contributed to the prevalence of the other two factors. To stress the legitimacy of their actions, the pirates call themselves Somali marines (Sörenson 2008: 28) or coast guards tasked with protecting legitimate Somali interests. This has given them popular support, at least, particularly in Puntland they initially had wide support from the population.

A crucial question to be posed, pertains to whether the massive naval forces present in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden will benefit the security, peace and stability interest of the region. Further it is also of great significance to pose the question whether the war on terror and war against piracy off the shores

of Somalia impact in the conflicts ravaging the region and the process of state building in HOA. Stemming from past and current history of the region it could be safely concluded that the war on terror and war against piracy, in the same way the Cold War intervention affected the region, would impact it adversely. State-building is by its very nature domestic, therefore external intervention distorts it. External intervention in whatever form, from Somalia to Ethiopia, Eritrea to Djibouti, Sudan to Ethiopia, Eritrea to Ethiopia have complicated the rampant conflicts in the HOA.

It has become clear that individual states have been trying to exploit the situation for their own selfish benefit too. This may rather increase the degree of insecurity in the region, because it creates division between the states, between favoured ones and hostile ones. But also the high concentration of the world naval forces in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean is seen as actually having nothing to do with terrorism and piracy, but rather has very much to do with domination and resource control. Some have even described it as the second scramble for African resources.

CONCLUSION

The argument this chapter has set out to promote is that there is interconnection between state-building, conflict and global war on terror. The process of state-building in the HOA is still highly precarious. The state as a political institution is claimed to display features whose hallmarks are fragility, collapse, weakness, and precariousness. This malice is affected by and constitutes a source of the festering conflicts ravaging the HOA. A weak or collapsed state is amenable to all sorts of conflicts. Furthermore a weak or collapsed state may provide fertile ground for terrorism. All this in turn is influenced by the global war on terror.

The global war on terror affects the process of state-building and the conflict situation in the HOA in at least two dimensions. The first dimension is that the global war on terror undermines state-building in the sense that it becomes an obstacle to fostering long-term state institutions. This occurs not only because it undermines state sovereignty which is increasingly being challenged from above (supra-national forces) and from below (sub-national forces), additionally the domestic context of state-building is blurred. The second dimension relates to peace and security which is a presupposition of functional and sustainable state-building. The global war on terror and piracy perverts the normal state-building process in the HOA.

The complexity and interconnectedness of the intra-state and inter-state conflicts and the concomitant pervasive insecurity ravaging it, makes the HOA the most conflict-ridden region on the African continent presently. This has

rendered the task of building durable and potent peace and security in the region and beyond extremely difficult. At the root of the rampant intra-state and inter-state conflicts and insecurity rests the crisis of the state. The precarious state-building process characterising the HOA has rendered the state a crisis-stricken one. State crisis in turn gave rise to conflicts and insecurity which are contributing factors to poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment.

Further at the root of these festering conflicts and insecurities are invariable historical, socio-economic, interlinked domestic, intra-regional and international factors. Various external interventions driven by competing national interests, economic, political, security and those strategically-linked to the global war on terror and concern on piracy off the Somali coast have rendered the conflicts intractable. In spite of engagements from local, national, regional and international actors to mitigate the conflicts, they have not yielded fruits.

The methodology of international humanitarian intervention and the politics of conflict containment which greatly emphasises on global strategic, security, political and economic interests of major powers has not only shown deficiency but also skewed the process of state building, peace and security building. Indeed, in some instances it may lead to the demise of societies. The piecemeal and isolated approach to conflict resolution is another factor that perpetuates the festering of conflicts in the HOA particularly when the piecemeal isolated approach is informed by global strategic, security, political and economic interests. The interlinked conflicts and insecurities certainly require holistic, historicised, and multidimensional analyses, regional approaches and mechanisms.

The burden of 'national languages' and the bondages of linguistic boundaries in postcolonial Africa

Finex Ndhlovu

INTRODUCTION

The topic of borders, borderlands and boundaries in Africa is both old and new. It is old in the sense that it dates back to pre-colonial (and colonial) periods of pastoralist seasonal migration and human population movement for purposes of trade and other social and cultural exchanges. This topic is new in that it continues to evolve, is being shaped and mediated by the ever changing social, political and economic circumstances both within the African continent as well as globally as suggested by Ndhlovu (2010). While there has always been a growing interest in this subject, the focus has largely been on borders and borderlands in the geographical sense. The common story in both academic and popular discourse is that African national borders and their adjacent borderlands are sites of 'ethnic conflict, political instability and criminal activity, giving an impression that the borderlands [and those residing in them are] at best are a costly nuisance and at worse a serious threat to states' (Cassanelli 2010: 133).

This chapter focuses on national languages and the extent to which they are regularly deployed in the construction of homogenised and territorialised national identities as borders that have produced the 'northern problem' and the 'toxic Other'. The discussion is informed by previous sociolinguistics and applied linguistics scholarship on the invention of languages and the problematic assumptions underlying what we know as languages today. Drawing on the Zimbabwe case study, the chapter returns to the knotty question of national language(s) for postcolonial countries in Africa and their intersection with the formation of skewed and exclusionary national identities.

The chapter builds on and extends into new directions and existing identity debates in postcolonial Africa by providing recent and original empirical evidence to support the argument that most African 'national languages' and colonially-inherited language descriptions and definition traditions constitute bondages of boundaries that have created multiple northern problems. The chapter provides detailed analysis of current attitudes to language and identity

in Zimbabwe, where Shona linguistic and cultural norms dominate with those of Ndebele vying as a little brother, while other ethnolinguistic polities remain imprisoned in the boundaries of these politically imposed national identity versions. Zimbabwe is a multilingual and multicultural country with 18 officially recognised African languages and ethnic groups that include Shona, Ndebele, Kalanga, Nambya, Tonga, Sotho, Dombe, Xhosa, Tonga of Mudzi, Venda, Shangani, Tshwawo, Tswana, Barwe, Sena, Doma, Chikunda and Chewa (Hachipola 1998). According to the 1982 National Census figures, the Shona are the biggest ethnic group constituting 75 per cent of the total national population followed by Ndebele (16.5%). African indigenous minorities constitute 7.5 per cent while non-African minorities (including English) account for 1 per cent of the total national population. However, considering that the 1982 statistics are three decades old, they are now obsolete and this renders current decisions on language status a product of impressionistic rather than scientific evidence. Since 1982, there has never been a systematic count of the Zimbabwean population in terms of its linguistic and ethnic complexion. The 1992 and 2002 National Population Census questionnaires were both conspicuous for their exclusion of questions on language and ethnicity.

In addition to other symbols and historical myths that sustain national identity, languages are often the marker that communities utilise to differentiate insiders from outsiders. As indicated in the subsequent sections of this article, it is in this context that national languages in particular constitute solid foundation for the genesis of what Anderson (1991) describes as 'imagined' communities whose parameters are defined in terms of both exclusion and subtle cultural normalisation. With specific reference to Zimbabwe, the chapter builds on the work of Terence Ranger (1985 & 1989) to show how the invention of monolithic linguistic identities by early missionaries and colonial academics gave birth to language-based boundaries that have subsequently become sites for imaginations of the toxic 'Other' in the postcolonial context.

Extending observations from the Zimbabwe case study to neighbouring Southern African countries, the chapter posits that colonially constructed versions of specific varieties of indigenous national languages (such as Shona and Ndebele in Zimbabwe, Setswana in Botswana, Chichewa in Malawi and Zulu and Xhosa in South Africa) present classic examples of how national languages have been and continue to be deployed as instruments of 'managing' fluid and diverse linguistic identities. In pursuing this line of argument, the chapter employs Makoni and Pennycook (2006: 3) ideas about the need for a rethink of 'the ways we look at languages and their relation to identity and geographical location, so that we move beyond notions of linguistic territorialisation in which language is linked to a geographical space'. Here, the chapter also spotlights the interrelationships among metadiscursive regimes, language inventions, colonial and postcolonial history, and language effects on the lived

experiences of both 'minority' and socio-politically advantaged African ethno-linguistic polities.

This chapter is organised into five sections as follows: The next section discusses language definition traditions, tracing their historical origins and how they have mediated and shaped past and present northern problems in Africa. In the third section, the chapter zeros in on the Zimbabwe case study seeking to demonstrate how the invention of Shona and Ndebele as major ethno linguistic categories created current false assumptions about the linguistic complexion of Zimbabwe and the ensuing geo-linguistic boundaries. This is followed by section four, which presents recent empirical evidence supporting the view that the internal geo-linguistic boundaries of Zimbabwe do indeed constitute a burden and a curse insofar as they constrain imaginations of both individual and group linguistic identities outside the normatively defined discursive constructs of 'languages' as standard countable entities. The concluding section distils the overarching argument of the chapter by highlighting the extent to which the notion of 'national language(s)' misdirects and misleads the postcolonial African identity debate in a manner that results in the erroneous and stereotyped labelling of socio-politically weak ethnolinguistic polities as the 'toxic' and non-desired 'Other'.

LANGUAGE DEFINITION TRADITIONS AND THE GENESIS OF NORTHERN PROBLEMS

Straddling the entirety of Africa from down south up to the northern part of the continent are multiple ethnic and cultural polities whose socio-economic and political fortunes are indexically connected to identities bestowed upon them by language definition traditions that are inconsistent with the communicative practices of the communities under consideration. Broadly speaking, there are two competing language definition traditions that inform perspectives on linguistic boundaries in Africa. The first language definition tradition, which is very common, is the ontological or metadiscursive view of language. Underpinning this perspective is an ideology of languages as separate and enumerable categories or countable institutions according to Makoni and Pennycook (2006). This view of language is reinforced by the existence of standardised versions in the form of grammars, dictionaries and other fossilised reference works. According to Grace (1981; 2005, cited in Makoni and Pennycook 2006: 2) the metadiscursive perspective considers languages to be autonomous texts for 'which the speakers would require very limited amounts of contextual information to process, the prototypical mode being the written'. The metadiscursive view of language is connected to the rise of the nation-state in Western Europe and advances in print technology (thanks to the industrial

revolution), which bequeathed language forms with a stable typographic identity. Linking the rise of the modern nation-state to the development of print languages, Anderson (1991: 46) notes three consequences of the invention of print languages, namely (a) the creation of unified fields of communication and exchange which reached beyond and below the elite; (b) giving a new fixity to language, manifested via official dictionaries, grammars and etymologies, which served as a homogenising force that brought together people using one common language; and (c) the creation of standardised national and official languages of power and domination such as 'standard English', 'standard Shona' and 'standard Ndebele'. As has now become well known, language standardisation kills diversity and suppresses the use of multiple language forms that are at odds with the set standards.

In his critique of the metadiscursive regime of language definition, Edward Said (1994) observes that the 'enumerability of language has to be understood as part of a broader project of "governmentality", part of a Eurocentric culture which relentlessly codified and observed everything about the non-European [...] in so thorough and detailed manner as to leave no item untouched, no culture unstudied' (cited in Makoni and Pennycook 2006: 2). Governmentality is a form of social and political control (the exercise of power) that is sustained by normalisation, discipline and punish. In his book on *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, Michel Foucault (1972) poignantly argues:

Power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised and it only exists in action. The individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his identity and characteristics is the product of a relation of power. Power must be analyzed as something which circulates. It is never localized here or there. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. Power is always already there. One is never outside it; there are no margins for those who break with the system to gamble in. Power is co-extensive with the social body. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms (Colin Gordon 1980: 31).

Therefore, from a Foucauldian perspective, power is fluid and elusive and manifests itself in various forms. This means that power is there everywhere and wherever there is power, there are power differentials. Foucault further contends that power must be understood as 'power/knowledge' which means that knowledge is what power relations produce in order to spread and disseminate 'legions of adapted, ambient individuals' (Caputo and Yount 1993: 6). This multi-formed and multiplied nature of the notion of power shows that power relations are not always underpinned by force and violence. Rather, the exercise of power is embedded in more subtle modes that lie hidden below the tightly knit grid of material realities. For Foucault then, the problematisation

of any particular aspect of human life is historically contingent upon power relations. In the context of African identitarian debates, this essentially means the powerful will always seek to construct power discourses that entrench their positions and normatively defined identity narratives as sources of power for dominating and controlling those that are socio-politically disadvantaged.

As is argued in the entire body of this article, national languages were invented as an integral part of the political project of governmentality, control and the exercise of power. National languages constitute another source of power for disciplining, punishing, normalising and imprisoning socio-politically disadvantaged polities into narrow cultural and linguistic norms of hegemonic forces. In other words, the concept of national language as we have come to know it today was simultaneously co-constructed with the invention of the nation-state as an integral part of the colonial project of domination and control. Of particular salience in the African context is the naming and development of standardised national languages that date back to and coincide with the onset of colonialism. Here, the notion of languages, conceptions of 'linguageness' and their associated metalanguages that describe them are brought under the spotlight. Is there any material essence, for example, in 'Shona', 'Ndebele', 'Zulu', 'Chewa' or 'Bemba' as languages? To what extent do these monolithic and ontological nomenclatures represent the multiple identity narratives of all who live in the states and polities where they are spoken? As this chapter argues, national languages can be seen as social inventions (Makoni and Pennycook 2006) used to make other language practices invisible by projecting an impression of uniformity in the midst of social, cultural, political and linguistic diversities.

The second language definition tradition is one that looks at languages as manifestations of multiple temporalities. The premise here is that languages do not exist as real ontological entities in the world and neither do they emerge from or represent fixed real environment. This is a non-materialist view of languages championed by Makoni and Pennycook in their (2006) groundbreaking work on disinventing and reinventing languages. For Makoni and Pennycook, the materiality of languages only arises insofar as they are tied to the material effects of the inventions, which 'influence how languages have been understood, how language policies have been constructed, how education has been pursued [...] and how people have come to identify with particular labels and at times to die for them' (Makoni and Pennycook 2006: 6).

In this context, languages are not the countable entities we often consider them to be. Rather, the concept of language can assume any of the following: cultural practices and identities, discursive practices, traditions, customs, social relationships, worldviews and philosophies and proverbial lore, among others. In other words, the concept of language is not always a noun; it can be an action word or even a describing word insofar as it can have several symbolic mean-

ings relating to the people's everyday lived experiences as they engage with one another, with nature and with their surroundings in general. This view of language exposes the tensions, contradictions and falsehoods underpinning dominant national identity narratives that consider standardised, enumerable and ontological versions of languages as the prime markers of individual and group identities.

The next section focuses on the historical circumstances around the evolution of national languages in Zimbabwe.

THE INVENTION OF SHONA AND NDEBELE HEGEMONY IN ZIMBABWE

The history of the invention of monolithic standardised national languages in Zimbabwe has been widely discussed by scholars including Chimhundu (1992); Ranger (1985 & 1989); and more recently Makoni, Brutt-Griffler and Mashiri (2007), and Ndhlovu (2006; 2009 & 2010). What all these studies have shown is that colonial and postcolonial forces of linguistic imperialism have colluded and collided to produce many marginalised cultural and political enclaves that have come to constitute Zimbabwe's northern problem. In the colonial context, the formation of Southern Rhodesia as a settler colony occurred simultaneously with the invention of new language categories that subsequently became the prime markers of African identities in the settler colony. Early missionaries and self-proclaimed colonial linguists played a key role in providing the much needed intellectual capital in the project of inventing national language hegemonies in Zimbabwe.

From 1903 up to 1929, the language debate in Zimbabwe was mainly dominated by seven missionary organisations. They included the London Missionary Society (based in the Matabeleland region with mission stations at Inyathi and Hope Fountain); Wesleyan Methodist Society (based in Mashonaland East province with mission stations at Waddilove near Marondera and Epworth near Harare); the Roman Catholic Church (operated from Chishawasha near Harare and Triashill near Rusape in Manicaland province); the Methodist Episcopal Church (with its headquarters at Old Umtali, near present day Mutare); the Anglicans (based at St Augustine's, also in Manicaland province); the American Methodists (operated from Mount Selinda and Chikore Missions, in the far southeastern side of Mutare); and the Dutch Reformed Church (based in the Masvingo province where it operated from Morgenster Mission near the Great Zimbabwe ruins) (Chimhundu 1992b).

Although they were run by men and women who had no training in linguistics and phonetics, the seven missionary societies developed a keen interest in the documentation and development of indigenous languages spoken in their respective spheres of evangelical influence. Because the different denomi-

nations had founded mission stations and established their headquarters in different parts of the country, they set up different printing presses where they produced different versions of church literature which varied from one church organisation to another. This marked the beginning of the invention of new language forms based on ontological or metadiscursive traditions that view languages as enumerable and discrete entities.

This view was and continues to be inconsistent with indigenous African language definition traditions in which the concept of language is seen as something that far transcends the minimalist medium of communication perspective. From the viewpoint of the native speakers of different African language forms, the concept of language is a continuum that interweaves issues of culture, identity, and a range of other social-relational processes. This is where the historical processes of the evolution and constitution of 'languages' by the early missionaries and colonial academics collided with and complicated notions of identity and being in colonial Zimbabwe, something that continues to the present day.

As Fortune (1969) observes, between 1898 and 1910, there were four ethnically/regionally-based translations of the Bible that reflected the different missionary groups' rivalries over language documentation and spheres of evangelical influence. Furthermore, very little effort was made by the early missionaries to develop what has come to be known as Zimbabwe's minority languages. The priority in the missionaries' work was the translation of the Bible and the creation and dissemination of evangelical material among the indigenous peoples in standardised monolithic national languages that were subsequently imposed on speakers of other language forms. Consequently, there started to emerge some disagreements over language issues among the missionary organisations themselves. For instance, at the 1913 Conference, missionaries from the Matabeleland region (representing the London Missionary Society) expressed their concern over the marginalisation of languages from their region. Rev. Neville Jones of the London Missionary Society, for example, proposed that:

Two committees should be set up, one for Mashonaland and the other for Matabeleland, for the purpose of compiling vernacular readers and that these should include one representative of each of the missionary societies working in those districts. He also moved that these committees explore the possibilities of Government help in the publication and production of the readers [...] (Fortune, 1969: 8).

Apart from highlighting the genesis of a bifurcated and bi-cultural view of the Zimbabwean society, the above statement is also indicative of the beginnings of tensions over language as well as contestations over the marginalisation

tion of what have come to constitute the country's minority languages. The regionalisation of religious organisations became a stumbling block to the documentation and development of those language varieties that were not well represented in the various conferences dealing with language issues in colonial Zimbabwe. Manyika, Karanga and Zezuru emerged as the only language forms that were represented by the chief role players from Mashonaland, while only Ndebele (and to a lesser extent Kalanga) had some representation from Matabeleland-based missionaries. Following the adoption of 'Responsible Government' in 1923, administration officials promised the missionaries financial support in the form of grants-in-aid for African education only on condition that all church run schools use a common orthography for their textbooks (Chimhundu 1992a). Again, this was yet another master stroke against language diversity and the recognition of multilingual identities as the government requirement entailed the adoption of linguistic harmonisation, which in essence, comes down to subtle cultural assimilation.

The need for reconciling and coordinating language development activities forced the different church organisations to form an umbrella body, the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference (S.R.M.C), which convened meetings in which church representatives participating in the discussions are said to have taken the side of provincial and tribal defenders (Fortune 1955). The behaviour of various church representatives can be interpreted in hegemonic terms in the sense that the desire to promote selected language varieties at the expense of others was closely linked to missionary competition for supremacy in the evangelisation mission. The hegemony in question here has to be understood in two ways. First, it is with respect to relations among missionary sects themselves as they sought to outmanoeuvre one another in conquering spheres of evangelical influence through literacy and language standardisation. Secondly, the phenomenon of hegemony is with respect to the activities of missionary sects vis-a-vis native populations who were effectively denied any meaningful say on matters pertaining to their linguistic and ethnic identities.

After the work of early missionaries came Clement Martin Doke's project on the unification of Shona dialects. There is legion of literature that recounts Professor Doke's 1929 to 1931 research activities in Zimbabwe. Some of the available studies include Fortune (1955 & 1969); Dembetembe (1969 & 1974); Mkanganwi (1972, 1974 & 1990), Ranger Pongweni (1990) and Chimhundu (1992a and 1992b). Doke was commissioned by the government to work out 'a settlement of the language problems involving the unification of the dialects into a literary form for official and educational purposes, and the standardization of a uniform orthography for the whole area of Mashonaland' (Doke 1931b: iii).

Although Doke's terms of reference appeared to have been limited to resolving perceived language problems in Mashonaland he is said to have 'travelled

from Salisbury to all parts of the country, visiting every native commissioner and every mission station' (Chimhundu, 1992b: 105). Admittedly, because Doke was commissioned by the government of Southern Rhodesia, some of his decisions could have been heavily influenced by the political desire for command over language with ultimate goal of developing languages of command (Brutt-Griffler 2006).

Doke (1931b: iii) explained the methods that he used, saying 'Natives were placed at my disposal for investigations, and information was most readily supplied.' There are two pertinent observations to be made about Doke's methodological approaches. First, Doke relied more on the views of Native commissioners and missionaries to the detriment of the voices of language speakers themselves. He only tried to incorporate the views of ordinary people by having selected people placed at his disposal by the missionaries and Native Commissioners.

Therefore, because there was no broad-based consultation, the native speakers of the languages in question were not actively involved in the entire project. On this point Ndhlovu (2006) observes that one certainly cannot rule out the biases and subjectivities associated with leaving missionaries and Native Commissioners with the sole responsibility of selecting the people to be interviewed. One outcome of this process was the over-reliance on information supplied by a selection of local indigenous people representing a small section of ethnolinguistic groups that were fortunate enough to be consulted by both the missionaries and Native Commissioners. The unfortunate ones had no input in the entire process, particularly those that are now derogatorily known as linguistic minorities. The project of creating multiple northern problems and sidelining the non-desired 'others' is thus seen in this case operating in a subtle way by silencing speakers of those languages forms that were deemed irrelevant and insignificant. For example, in the north-western part of the country, language standardisation activities concentrated mainly on the Ndebele language, thereby subsuming the Kalanga, Venda, Sesotho, Tonga, Nambya, Dombe and other ethnolinguistic groups under the cultural and Ndebele/Matebeleland linguistic formation. Similarly, the language standardisation processes carried in the eastern part of Zimbabwe that came to be known as Mashonaland overlooked the linguistic norms of such groups as Ndaue, Korekore and their related sub-groups. By virtue of shared geographical location, the Ndaue people of eastern Zimbabwe are often erroneously subsumed under the dominant Manika formation while the Korekore are sometimes conflated with the dominant Zezuru formation.

Secondly, Doke seems to have simply followed on the footsteps of the early missionaries by operating within the frame of linguistic and geographical boundaries that had already been invented. He heavily relied on the tribalised geolinguistic map already created by missionary societies as they competed for

evangelical spheres of influence. This could probably have been a consequence of the fact that he worked with a government appointed Language Committee made up of two missionaries. These were Rev. B.H. Barnes (representing Karanga) and Rev. A. Burbridge (representing Zezuru) (Fortune 1955).

Considering the language politics that had already taken root at that time, it is not surprising that there were no representatives for all other Shona dialects, let alone for Ndebele and the minority languages spoken throughout the rest of the country. This again can be easily explained by recourse to the objectives of the colonial project which sought to appropriate and cannibalise languages and their identities for administrative purposes. The intention of colonial administrators was to lump together the diverse native polities into a selection of invented identity categories for purposes of containing and controlling fluid identities.

In that context, Doke's research provided intellectual capital to the colonial project. In his 1931 *Report on the Unification of Shona Dialects*, he put forth several observations and/or recommendations that left an indelible mark on identitarian discourses in Zimbabwe (see Chimhundu, 1992b and Ndhlovu, 2006 for detailed discussion on Doke's recommendations). It suffices to note at this point that prior to Doke's 1931 recommendations, there was no language called Shona in Zimbabwe, which means that the present day Shona language is in reality Doke's invention.

Furthermore, Doke's recommendation of Ndebele as the sole African language of education in Matabeleland heralded the unparalleled preponderance of the Ndebele language and Ndebele cultural norms in that region. While there is no doubt that prior to colonial occupation, the Ndebele state was the dominant political formation in western Zimbabwe, there was no overt imposition of Ndebele linguistic norms upon speakers of other languages resident in present-day Matabeleland region.

The work of Doke, therefore, appears to have influenced the current scenario in which the socio-politically minority ethnolinguistic polities of Zimbabwe are marginalised from mainstream national identity discourses and their languages viewed as inferior, with very limited institutional and functional space in the country's national life. Today, the legacy of both the early missionaries and Doke looms large in the Zimbabwean language politics and language policy debates.

Drawing on this colonial legacy, Shona and Ndebele politicians have developed the tendency of bringing to the limelight only minority languages and their speakers for purposes of discrediting or subverting each other in their political rivalries. Therefore, the enduring question is to what extent invented national language boundaries and their associated cultural norms constitute a blessing and/or curse. The next section addresses this question.

ZIMBABWE'S GEOLINGUISTIC BOUNDARIES: A BLESSING OR A BURDEN?

The linguistic boundaries of Zimbabwe that are traditionally perceived to be coinciding with the country's internal political/geographical frontiers constitute both a blessing and a burden. The bifurcated view of Zimbabwe as made up of Mashonaland region (where Shona is the prescribed national language) and Matabeleland (where Ndebele is the prescribed national language) is a blessing for the socio-politically advantaged ethnic Shona and Ndebele groups. As both the Shona and Ndebele languages are spoken in areas that are invariably multilingual, the national status of these two languages has provided their mother tongue speakers with a rarely contested weapon for justifying their claims to political preponderance and for seeing themselves as the sovereigns in their respective geopolitical regions.

Although the linguistic hegemony of Shona and Ndebele are a colonial legacy, their position as the sole national languages remains entrenched in the postcolonial context. There are several reasons for this. First is the national language policy machinery that continues to view the presence of multiple language forms as a problem that needs to be resolved through the imposition of selected national and official languages on all citizens. Second is the agency and complicity of minority ethnolinguistic polities to the imposition of hegemonic languages. With specific reference to the case studies of Cameroon and Zimbabwe, Ndhlovu (2010a) spotlights three important ways by which the actions of minorities often sustain, rather than subvert the imposition of hegemonic languages. First is the adoption of language committees as the platform for pushing the agenda of promoting the maintenance and widespread use of minority languages and cultures. A major pitfall of this strategy is that 'the language committees are entities "led" by powerful, prestigious and well connected "politician-like" individuals', says Ndhlovu (2010a: 25), thereby reducing them to institutions that sustain dominant and hegemonic ideologies that view languages as 'things' that exist in standard form. Second is the idea of 'language planning from below', which has become a fashionable strategy used by most minority ethnolinguistic communities. Ndhlovu says the limitation of this approach lies in that:

Formal or conventional language planning does not constitute a viable weapon for liberating local communities from hegemonic linguistic impositions. For, it would be naive to assume that the very institutions (the nation-state and the formal school system) that brought about conditions for the demise of plurilingualism would all of a sudden turn out to be the saviors of marginalized languages. The point is this: while it is important for minorities to resist the imposition of hegemonic languages, this should be done in an arena that is outside the structural arrangements of the nation-state (Ndhlovu, 2010a: 30).

Another way minorities have inadvertently contributed to the marginalisation of their mother tongues relates to their naive acceptance and celebration of piecemeal concessions in the electronic media and in education. Citing the example of Zimbabwe's minority ethnolinguistic groups organised under various language associations, Ndhlovu further cautions that 'in place of passionate pleas for more space for their languages in mainstream media and formal education, minority groups should be advocating the devolution of language practice in a manner that gives local communities autonomy over their language resources' (Ndhlovu 2010a: 33). Please refer to Ndhlovu (2010a) for a detailed discussion on how the minorities in multilingual postcolonial African countries have both overtly and inadvertently contributed to the marginalisation of their own mother tongues.

To the speakers of multiple Zimbabwean languages labelled as 'minority languages', the politically defined linguistic boundaries of Zimbabwe, that were inherited wholesale from colonial language definition traditions, constitute a burden. Invented linguistic categories, some as recent as the 1930s, continue to sustain and legitimise unreasonable claims to political, economic and cultural superiority by the Shona and Ndebele polities of Zimbabwe.

The consequences of the false assumption that every black Zimbabwean speaks either Shona or Ndebele language have been the assimilation and imprisonment of diverse ethnolinguistic polities into invented linguistic boundaries that are now proving very difficult to break. The hegemony of national languages (and their mother tongue speakers) was expressed in very illuminating metaphors by one language expert and cultural activist who was part of the 1998 National Language Policy Advisory Panel of Zimbabwe:

When you say let us be one in order to bring about unity, you must also examine how the one being invited takes the invitation. If the one being invited to be Ndebele is Kalanga and is not given the chance to be enthusiastic about it, he feels downtrodden and once a man feels downtrodden, he looks at the political muscle ahead of him or behind him and he says the best is simply to get into the train and forget about it. That is what other minority language groups are doing. They have not been brought to a situation where they look at themselves as part of a group that must identify themselves in order to achieve something economically, politically or culturally as a nation but rather as people who have been forced into it for the benefit of others. Those that are regarded as minority language speakers simply found themselves in a train that goes nowhere for them. It's only the master who knows where the train should go. Minority language groups are being used as additionals in the consolidation of numbers for purposes of winning elections, for purposes of domination, for purposes of manipulation and for purposes of exploitation as it were. This is what is happening. Those that are in Matabeleland will say I am Ndebele; all of you must join me. Those that are

in Mashonaland will also say either you join us or you will see what happens at the elections. And so they begin to join blindly only to realise that at the end they are the losers. Language therefore no longer becomes a tool for development but rather a tool for gaining political power. Language is used and manipulated for political expediency rather than cultural empowerment. So, we have not been successful in using Ndebele and Shona as the rallying languages to bring everybody together. But these have been used to bring everybody into a kraal that is heavily guarded and once you are in, you cannot get out (Oral Interview).

In the above transcript, the use of Shona and Ndebele as the rallying points for fashioning national cultural and political uniformity is typified as underpinned and mediated by tactics of coercion, intimidation and manipulation. Consequently, speakers of languages other than Shona and Ndebele find themselves getting into a project they do not identify with. The word 'kraal' in the above quotation is an important metaphor that gives a vivid picture of people being literally rounded up into the Shona and Ndebele worldviews in the same way herd-boys would force a herd of cattle into an enclosure.

The point is that beneath the outward appearance of a seemingly united people lie deep-seated feelings of resentment, exclusion and disillusionment among those marginalised language speakers who have been forced into 'a heavily guarded kraal'. This view was reiterated by speakers of minority languages who perceived the Zimbabwe national identity imaginations moulded around Shona and Ndebele cultural norms as divisive and entrenching perceived language-based classes in the Zimbabwean society. Expressing her view with regard to the current concept of national unity and national integration in Zimbabwe, one Tonga language speaker argued:

Personally, I believe this focus on Shona and Ndebele alone as a nation building strategy is actually divisive. If there were to be more language groups that are recognised, all these language-based antagonisms would come to an end. The problems and political antagonism that we find in Zimbabwe today emanate from the perception that the only languages to be recognised are Shona and Ndebele. This makes it very easy for two groups to fight one another. ... It also creates some classes in Matabeleland whereby those people who speak languages other than Ndebele are seen as second class citizens. This negates the livelihood of people who speak languages other than Ndebele and Shona.

The idea of there being classes of Zimbabwean citizens meshes with the findings of studies carried out in comparable multilingual and multicultural contexts such as Australia, where the debate on issues around citizenship, national identity and belonging is ongoing. In recent studies focusing on the African background, Australian citizens' perceptions about being and becoming

Australian, Ndhlovu (2010b and forthcoming) found that there were strong opinions about the existence of classes of citizens in Australia. For instance, when asked to talk about her feelings as a recently naturalised Australian citizen, one participant gave the following detailed response:

To answer your question, I don't think that I feel like an Australian citizen. I think I am second class, third class, or some sixth class citizen somewhere. I definitely think there is some hierarchy of citizens in Australia; some are more citizen than others.

This line of thinking is neither new nor far-fetched as it resonates with previous research on Australian citizenship that identifies four categories of citizens:

- a) *Indigenous national citizens* – those for whom Australia is their ancestral homeland and are entitled to citizenship by birth and heritage
- b) *Settler national citizens* – Anglo-Celts and their descendants who were automatically transformed from being British subjects into Australian citizens
- c) *Sojourner national citizens* – immigrants who came and settled down after acquiring Australian citizenship. Some in this category are still in the process of relocating their emotional attachment to Australia from their ancestral homeland
- d) *Ethnic citizens* – those who came in search of better social and economic prospects and succeeded in acquiring Australian citizenship for its instrumental pay-offs but have not yet adopted or do not even intend to adopt Australia as their homeland (Davidson 1997; Chesterman 1997; and Tavan 2005).

Although the above taxonomies of citizens are specific to the predominantly immigrant Australian context, they nevertheless provide a wealth of insights relevant to understandings of categories of citizens in Zimbabwe. Whereas perceptions about classes of Australian citizens are premised on the immigrant and indigeneity criteria, the Zimbabwean citizenship categories are premised on linguistic and cultural criteria as shown below. In their order of importance, the following are the suggested language-based classes of Zimbabwean citizens:

- 1) Citizens that identify with Shona as their ethnic language
- 2) Citizens that identify with Ndebele as their ethnic language
- 3) Citizens descendent from the British who identify English as their Ethnic language
- 4) Citizens that identify an 'officially recognised minority language' as their ethnic language

- 5) Citizens whose ethnic language is a 'not officially recognised minority' language
- 6) Citizens descendent from non-African immigrants whose ethnic language is not African

These citizenship categories reflect perceived degrees of Zimbabwean-ness that implicate and oftentimes actually translate into all sorts of socio-political and economic hierarchies including power hierarchies, access to certain political positions both at local and national levels, access to resources, and general social status in everyday life. In postcolonial Zimbabwe, those with Shona as their ethnic language perceive themselves and are perceived as the superior class of Zimbabwean citizens. Below them are speakers of Ndebele followed by all other ethnolinguistic groups that occupy the bottommost rungs of the citizenship ladder. This hierarchy of citizens is further evidenced by the order in which languages are used in official government documents such as the Zimbabwe passport where information on the condition of issue of the passport and all pages for visa labels are written chronologically in Shona, Ndebele and English.

Given that a passport is a document that identifies one's nationality and citizenship when travelling internationally, the underlying assumption of such language use pattern is that Shona, Ndebele and English are the three important classes of citizens. This is where the issue of imposed linguistic boundaries meet with formation of the northern problem. In a public lecture on 'Language, Dialect and Ethnicity: The Last Kicks of Tribalism in Zimbabwe' at the Midlands State University in Gweru, Herbert Chimhundu (2005) alluded to how Zimbabwe's national, provincial and district boundaries are simplistically conflated with ethnolinguistic boundaries. Chimhundu observed that:

In our minds there is a very simple way of conflating provincial and district boundaries with linguistic boundaries or identities. So what we are saying is that on the onset of the colonizing mission in Zimbabwe, two things were happening at the same time, namely the process of consolidating Rhodesia as a self-governing colony and the process of inscribing regional/provincial/district identities on individual groups of people. (Chimhundu 2005:36)

In other words, regional or provincial boundaries in Zimbabwe are viewed as coterminous with ethnolinguistic frontiers and they are also used as prime markers of the citizens' ethnic and linguistic affiliations. As Zimbabwe is divided into two main geographical regions of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, all people residing in Matabeleland, regardless of their ethnic affiliation, are loosely labelled as *amaNdebele* and their language is *isiNdebele*. The same goes for Mashonaland where everybody in that region is considered being a *muShona* and their language is *chiShona*. These labels are also inscribed on national iden-

tity documents such that in Zimbabwe it is very easy to tell the district from which one comes by simply looking at the prefix or suffix on the national identity card. Such regional and/or district identity markings and demarcations have been simplistically translated into ethnolinguistic labels that serve as the basis for both cultural assimilation and marginalisation.

What is also evident from the foregoing is that unlike what used to be the case during the colonial period where discrimination and unequal treatment of citizens were premised on the colour bar, the postcolonial order is characterised by the emergence of social classes derived from language-based forms of marginalisation. This means language is one of the several loci around which revolve struggles over ideologies of national identity imaginations. In the case of Zimbabwe, oral evidence from people that were interviewed by this writer demonstrates that language marginalisation is a manifestation of the ongoing processes of legitimating and institutionalising the hegemonic preponderance of Shona and Ndebele cultural norms, camouflaged as nation building, national unity and cultural integration.

The complex combination of arbitrarily defined geo-linguistic boundaries, invented linguistic identities and the postcolonial project of forcing everybody to identify either as Ndebele or Shona has not made the status of minority groups any better. These issues received extensive criticism mainly from marginalised language speakers and media practitioners and book publishers who spoke with this writer. For instance, in his response to questions on the place of marginalised languages in print and electronic media, one media practitioner lamented what he termed the 'latent belief in central government and in policy making that everyone in Zimbabwe either understands Shona or Ndebele.' These sentiments were echoed by another participant who argued that 'it is a baseless and dangerous assumption to think that everyone in Zimbabwe can speak Shona or Ndebele.' He went on to typify this as some form of colonialism, suggesting that:

This issue of colonization is in our bones. There are people who believe that inasmuch as the whites colonized the blacks, Ndebele and Shona should also colonize other languages. And as I said, imperialism knows no colour. It's about power relationships and economic relationships between two people. So you will find that the tendency therefore is if some people had their way, they would impose languages of their choice. The whole of Matabeleland North and South would be Ndebele and everywhere else would be Shona.

The sentiments expressed in the above quotation clearly capture the way in which other language speakers in Zimbabwe have been subordinated to the hegemonic and imperialist aspirations of Shona and Ndebele language speakers. Due to the skewed colonial and postcolonial policies of linguistic assimilation

and subtle cultural oppression, all languages in Matabeleland have lost ground to Ndebele and those in Mashonaland have yielded to Shona hegemony. This form of language marginalisation, which often translates into economic deprivation and socio-political discrimination, has been interpreted as another form of internal colonisation but this time has been based on language rather than race or skin colour.

The phenomenon of internal colonisation and how it plays out in post-colonial Zimbabwe is comparable to the 'Celtic fringe' described in Michael Hechter's (1975) book *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536–1966*. With particular focus on the marginalisation of the Celtic ethnolinguistic group in national development during the formation of the British Empire, Hechter provides a detailed analysis of how the internal colonisation model provides a more nuanced explanation of unequal power relations between the superordinate and subordinate language groups:

The superordinate group, now ensconced as the core, seeks to stabilize and monopolize its advantages through policies aiming at the institutionalization and perpetuation of the existing stratification system. Ultimately, it seeks to regulate the allocation of social roles such that those roles commonly defined as having high status are generally reserved for its members. Conversely, individuals from the less advanced group tend to be denied access to these roles. This stratification system assigns individuals to specific roles in the social structure on the basis of objective cultural distinctions [and not skin colour or race] (Hechter, 1975: 39).

Within a system of internal colonisation, the intersections of language, power and inequality are felt as members of the dominated ethnic groups seek employment, education and socio-political opportunities in an environment where the culture and language of the dominant group are part of the criteria for upward social mobility (Bulcha 1997). In the context of postcolonial Zimbabwe, this description typifies asymmetrical power relations between marginalised language speakers on the one hand and mother tongue speakers of Shona/Ndebele on the other.

Strategies such as subtle cultural assimilation, social engineering and normalisation have also sustained the political project of conflating invented linguistic boundaries with people's identities in postcolonial Zimbabwe. This view was clearly articulated by most people who consider a language other than Shona or Ndebele to be their mother tongue. For instance, one academic book publisher who indicated that his mother tongue was Venda made the following revealing observation regarding the intersection of political control and the politics of language in Zimbabwe:

There appears to be a certain phobia in government, which may not be founded. They seem to be scared of this diversity and how it can be contained because the Ndaou might rise one day, the Venda might rise one day. So let everyone be identified either as Shona or Ndebele. As I said earlier on, there appears to be 'a fear of the unknown'. Recognizing linguistic diversity is so politically threatening. The fear is that one day a strong personality might emerge from the Venda, the Kalanga or any one of the other minority groups. So the government does not see any benefits emanating from promoting linguistic diversity. They see more problems than benefits. The argument is that by clamouring for the recognition of their individual identities, these people do not want conformity. The fear is that after clamouring for their language rights, these people will demand more concessions, for example in the form of more political space. The government sees them as being rebellious hence the suspicion. The impression is that after all they [marginalized language speakers] are too few to recognize.

The above opinion was shared by yet another participant who reiterated the fact that in Zimbabwe and in other comparable postcolonial African nations there is, in fact, a cycle of fear of some 'unknowns', and 'Pandora's boxes' and 'cans of worms' that might be opened by admitting the existence of viable language groups other than those christened as national languages. In the words of the participant:

The politicians and colonially educated people like ourselves think and feel threatened by the prospects of promoting multilingualism. Sometimes it's preservation of self in professional terms and sometimes it's 'fear of the unknown' where you get questions like now you are opening 'a Pandora's Box'. Where will this end? Are we going to have tiny little federations all over the place, and after all Zimbabwe is small enough? Some people think perhaps if you allow these languages to develop, this might usher in some centrifugal forces that may tear apart the nation state. But I don't agree with such an argument. You are happier ruling a people who are themselves happy – beating their own drums but you are their boss. They are a happy people and not disgruntled.

The point being underscored here is that there is deliberate marginalisation of some linguistic and cultural groups as a way of protecting the status quo. Consequently, diversity is suppressed by major language speakers who feel their socio-cultural and political interests may be threatened by the emergence of potentially powerful people from other ethnolinguistic polities. In broad terms, the problem of socio-political and cultural marginalisation is configured in terms of what Hall (2002: 98) calls 'the political discourse of misrecognition,' which manifests itself through cultural domination, disadvantage, disrespect and social exclusion. This is best illustrated by the Ndebele ethnic polity, which owes

its dominance in the Matabeleland region to colonial and postcolonial political processes of nationbuilding and identity formation that deliberately promoted and imposed Ndebele linguistic and cultural norms on all peoples resident in this part of the country. As an ethnolinguistic group, the Ndebele people are a numerical minority in Zimbabwe vis-a-vis other ethnic groups such as the Kalanga that are often discursively conflated with and subsumed within the Ndebele formation. Furthermore, because they constitute approximately 15 per cent of the national population of Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe, 1982), the Ndebele people are a minority ethnic polity – especially in relation to Shona. Therefore, Ndebele hegemony in Zimbabwe has less to do with numerical supremacy and more to do with socio-political power of this ethnic polity dating back to the pre-colonial period and sustained by both colonial and postcolonial governments.

The data presented above also show that the marginalisation of some Zimbabwean language groups has come in two forms: first, by deliberately keeping quiet about them, pretending they do not exist and secondly, by overtly discouraging any debates that seek to bring marginalised language identities to the limelight of public national identitarian discourses. Such manoeuvres are often justified in terms of the popular equation of ethnolinguistic group equals tribe, which translates to tribalism in an antagonistic sense. Therefore, as a way of trying to avert perceived language-based political divisions, impressions have been created over many years that certain ethnolinguistic polities simply do not exist. This has, however, fermented deep-seated feelings of rejection among those whose identities are deliberately ignored, something that has further promoted the existence of perennial northern problems.

CONCLUSION

Although present-day African national languages are often accepted and celebrated in unproblematic ways as symbols of national unity and social cohesion, this chapter has taken a critical view of them, suggesting that they are indeed deployed as an albatross for subtle cultural oppression and assimilationist ideologies. The chapter has argued that some of the multiple northern problems in postcolonial Africa are a consequence of collusion between political projects of national language inventions and quests for group and individual hegemonic aspirations.

As standardised national languages are identity categories that are often moulded around the linguistic and cultural norms of socio-politically advantaged groups, they are often consistently used as convenient weapons for subtle cultural oppression. The Zimbabwe case study discussed in this article demonstrates the extent to which speakers of the so-called minority languages

have been literally frog-marched through language policy into embracing and indentifying with national language boundaries that now constitute a burden and curse into which they remain perpetually imprisoned. This is how the politics of the manufacture of the northern problem has operated in other parts of postcolonial Africa as well, where the cultures and language practices of socio-politically minority groups exist on the fringes of mainstream national identity narratives.

'Northern problem'

Postcolony, identity and political [in]stability in Cote d'Ivoire and Togo

Kwesi Aning and Naila Salihu

INTRODUCTION

Colonialism bequeathed African states with contested and conflict-generating legacies, rooted in problematic boundaries, fragmented identities and the fragile nature of the postcolony. These legacies cut through territories inhabited by different indigenous peoples and societies with varied internal diversities, and arbitrarily amalgamated a diversity of communities into uneasy administrative, political, economic, social and cultural structures or colonial states (Welsh 1996; Mbembe 2001). Analyses abound on how African political boundaries were arbitrarily drawn for the purposes of administrative convenience or as a result of territorial trade-offs among imperial powers.

In most parts of Africa, heterogeneous groups marked by different nations, ethnic identities, kinship ties, classes, religions, language groups, races, cultures and geographic locations, were forced to live together within the boundaries of the postcolonial nation-states. As a result of the cavalier construction of colonial borders, the postcolonial successor regimes inherited caricatured territorial entities that were made up of distinct and sometimes hostile ethnic groups and in some instances divided homogeneous ethnic communities into two or more states (Ayoob 1995).

These boundaries, irrespective of their arbitrariness, were deemed inviolable by independent African states through the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Indeed the arbitrary boundaries were used as part of the pan-Africanist agenda. It is no wonder why, Africa's new elites who ascended to power as a result of decolonisation processes decided to accept, consolidate and exploit these balkanised states. What is surprising is that while there is scarcely any African state without boundaries-related problems, the issues of inclusion/exclusion have not opened serious internal African debate even where violent outcomes are manifest (Dorman et al., 2007; Adebajo 2010). Both Cote d'Ivoire and Togo share similar political and socio-economic experiences. Both countries have diverse ethno-religious groups or societies that coexist in the modern state. Following independence from French colonialism in the 1960s, successive leaders

in both countries have pursued varied policies with mixed outcomes relating to political stability and social cohesion.

On one hand Côte d'Ivoire was once touted as the beacon of economic growth and political stability in a troubled West African sub-region. The country's remarkable economic growth and political developments in the first two decades of independence was often termed as the 'African Miracle' (Langer 2011). Politicisation of identity and citizenship by successive political elites, particularly with the introduction of the concept of *Ivoirité*, which sought to construct an Ivorian identity that questioned the citizenship rights of most Northerners eventually plunged the country into an internecine political crisis.

A failed coup d'état in 2002 resulted in a bloody civil war, which effectively split the country into a rebel-held north and a government-controlled south. Though the period of active warfare was relatively short, it resulted in more than 1000 battle deaths, and several civilian casualties and human suffering. The quest for sustainable peace and stability remains elusive despite several efforts by the international community to facilitate this. Particularly, after several postponements, presidential elections held in October/November 2010 were considered a milestone towards consolidating democratic peace and stability in the country. However, disputes about the outcomes of elections which are deeply rooted in the 'northern problem' brought the country to the brink of another devastating conflict. Violent conflicts, particularly reprisal attacks by loyalist militias of both Laurent Gbagbo and Alasane Ouattara were reported in different parts of the country after the forceful removal of Laurent Gbagbo. This is a glaring manifestation of the 'northern problem' which, like a volcano, could explode in future if not constructively managed.

Since independence, the political landscape of Togo has been one of political upheavals or violence, human rights abuses, politically-motivated murders and economic decline. Politicisation and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or identity is prohibited by Togolese Constitution. Nonetheless, the phenomenon is very pervasive and practiced by members of almost all ethnic groups as well as political elites. Although the country has not witnessed any large scale civil war, it remains relatively fragile.

The existence of real or imagined politicisation or discrimination of identity, culminating into the near existence of a north-south divide, particularly the Ewe-dominated South and northern ethnic groups such as Kabiye has been a major source of political tension in the country, often escalating into intermittent political violence with a clearly interethnic character. This chapter undertakes a comparative empirical analysis of the 'northern problem' in Côte d'Ivoire and Togo political dispensation by tracing the historical dynamics of the phenomenon vis-à-vis the policies of successive leadership in the two countries since independence. We seek to establish how perceived or actual political and developmental processes contributed to tensions among diverse

groups leading in some cases to political instability or otherwise in the two countries. We argue that, the 'northern problem' remains one of the key causes of political instability in both Cote d'Ivoire and Togo. While in the case of Cote d'Ivoire the 'northern problem' coupled with other immediate and root factors have resulted in a protracted political crisis; Togo albeit with some instances of political instability in the past has been relatively stable. However, there remain latent ethno-regional tensions arising out of real or perceived domination and discrimination of one group against other groups. These often contribute to political instability.

In doing so, the first section of the chapter takes a critical analysis of the crisis of colonial boundaries in Africa. The second section takes a historical journey into the causes of the Ivorian political crises by locating them within their colonial antecedents. In the third section, we examine how policies of successive leaders vis-à-vis the 'northern' problem contributed to political crises. The third section, delves into the political history of Togo to bring to the fore what policies or practices have been pursued by various leaders.

THE CRISIS OF COLONIAL BOUNDARIES IN AFRICA

Although the actual time span of the colonial experience of control, subjugation and dominance was relatively short in the political history of the continent, its impact and negative legacies in terms of reordering the political landscape, modes of economic production, social relations and cleavages and twisting the identities and consciousness of the African to perceive him/herself as the 'Other'. challenged post-independence governments and presaged the nature of policies adopted to address them (Thompson 2001; Mbembe 2001). Mbembe captures this well and will need extensive quotation.

According to Mbembe, 'colonial sovereignty rested on three sorts of violence. The first was the founding violence, [that] underpinned not only the right of conquest but all prerogatives flowing from that right. [...] A second sort of violence [...] had to do with legitimisation. Its function was [...] to justify its necessity and universalising mission – in short, to help produce an imaginary capacity converting the founding violence into authorising authority. The third form of violence was designed to ensure this authority's maintenance, spread and permanence' (Mbembe 2001:25). Thus throughout Africa, colonial policies and that of successive governments in the post-independence era have created and perpetuated the mutual isolation and dominance of certain groups of people in especially political and socio-economic spheres of influence. For instance colonial authorities were in the short-term mainly interested in resource exploitation in the African colonies to feed European industries at the expense of promoting long-term socio-economic and political developments.

In West Africa, it is generally observed that there are widening inequalities between a more developed south coastal area and an underdeveloped periphery in the Sahelian north in coastal countries such as Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Benin and Cote d'Ivoire. A critical factor in the North-South divide is the uneven distribution of natural resources within those countries. The forest in the South was seen an invaluable asset that could be exploited directly. The south was also endowed with suitable climatic conditions for producing food and crops such as cocoa and cola. The fertile soils also support the production of a variety of food crops. However, the North is decidedly disfavoured due to its poor soil quality, short growing season and erratic rainfall that tend to reduce the variety of crops that can be grown. The region has few mineral deposits of any significance (Tsikata and Seine 2004). Due to the relative disadvantage of the north, nearly all colonial governments made extensive use of forced labour through policies whereby the north was as an area of labour reserve. Such areas were deliberately underdeveloped, thus creating an unnatural and dangerous political and developmental schism between the northern and southern parts of the states they governed (Tsikata and Seine 2004; Atmore and Oliver 2005). Africa's immediate post-independence leaders sought to introduce nation-building policies that would unite their fragmented societies, promote socio-economic development and assert their legitimacy in the face of political upheavals and economic difficulties. However, this changed over time as most leaders opted for centralised states that afforded the exercise of greater political power and control (Keller 2007).

However, such policies could not put a lid on the disgruntled 'north' or the marginalised groups. Historical imbalances in development and systematic inequalities that coincided with fluid ethno-religious cleavages, often generate grievances and undermine socio-political cohesion among the relatively deprived or marginalised northern territories and their relatively affluent southern populations, thereby fuelling resentment. This eventually leads to people resorting to violence as a means of seeking redress for historical injustices. Although ethnic identity or its diversities do not necessarily cause or perpetuate violent conflict, it has become universal shorthand that marks a host of much more complex issues of identity and differences' (Broch-Due 2005:6).

Thus, neither ethnic identity nor diversity alone serve as explanatory variables that can sufficiently account for the rampant violent conflicts in ethnically divided states. Indeed there are clear examples of nations with slight diversity in culture, language or religion such as Somalia that have been engulfed in protracted civil wars, while many other heterogeneous societies continue to live in relative peace (Brown 1996; Osman 2007). The inception of political liberalisation in African saw the use of ethnicity as a political resource for mass mobilisation, political elites deliberately politicised and/or manipulated it in their quest for power, often triggering violent conflicts (Ake 1991). Thus the

exploitation of autochthony discourses through which certain individuals or groups of people claim to be the original inhabitants of the land or 'sons of the soil' has become a key element of many armed conflicts in Africa.

Often, such discourses are used within the process of political liberalisation to redefine citizenship on narrow and exclusionary terms, thereby codifying political identities (Dunn 2009). Neo-patrimonialism in most African states and the prevalence of patronage networks have resulted in an increased utilisation of autochthony discourses meant to exclude competitors in the struggle for political and economic resources associated with state power. As a result of this development, marginalised groups often resort to violence in dealing with ontological uncertainties (Dunn 2009). As a result of these occurrences, it becomes obvious that ethnic, racial, communal and religious intolerance and conflicts are among the most significant and growing challenges to peace, democratic governance and rule of law in Africa (Gabirol 2006: 1).

BACKGROUND TO THE IVORIAN CRISIS

Similar to most postcolonial African states, Côte d'Ivoire is a heterogeneous state with diverse ethnic and religious groups. In the milieu of dwindling economic fortunes, the death of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, without a well thought-out succession plan opened a Pandora's Box to the latent socio-political tensions in the country. Although political crisis on the surface could be attributed to the struggle for political supremacy between the north and south, it is deeply rooted in the issues of identity or citizenship, historical socio-economic and political grievances. This assertion finds resonance in several analyses that underscored the interactions of varying degrees of socio-cultural, political, economic and environmental conditions that transform issues of identity into instruments of conflict (Kaldor 1999).

With particular reference to identity as a contributory factor to the crisis, Ruth Marshall-Frateni, has argued that both the colonial and postcolonial Ivorian state produced ethnic identities and has promoted a territorialised and ethnicised definition of citizenship and national identity. Thus the Ivorian crisis is not simply a struggle for state power, but more importantly, a redefinition of the substance of citizenship itself (Marshall-Frateni 2007). Indeed, colonialism bequeathed most African states with a multi-tiered citizenship structure whose central feature was racial discrimination (Manby 2009).

Thus the colonial state was founded on the basis of racial and ethnic distinction, this justified the gaps in standards of living and legal rights between the rulers and the ruled (Manby 2009). While the colonial rulers and their fellow European settlers were regarded as full citizens who enjoyed the same rights as their relatives in Europe, the native Africans, with the exception of an

assimilated few, were classified as subjects without full rights (Manby 2009). Further, as Marshal-Frateni argues, the colonial power *subjectified* natives in terms of primordialist categories whose fundamental logic was one of biological race which under certain circumstances are appropriated and set to work under imaginations of autochthony, as the sign of authentic identity (Mbembe 2001). For instance, in La Côte d'Ivoire, the French colonial policy of creating administrative units based on 'pure autochthonous races', brought about some sort of categorisation of citizens.

These categorisations and distinctions have survived beyond the colonial period and have indeed been appropriated and made operative in the postcolonial period. More striking is the manner in which the colonial state, through the plantation economy it developed, structured civil society and reified forms of political identification (Chauveau and Dozon 1987). Characteristic of similar experiences in other African states, Côte d'Ivoire's southern populations were in closer contact with earlier European merchants and colonial authorities. As a result, they benefited from the short-term socio-economic development policies such as the education and infrastructure needed for running the colonial administration.

However, northerners with little access to socio-economic opportunities served as a source of labour for the plantations. Thus, the plantation economy provided the context in which the colonial state produced a particular form of ethnic identity and sub-consciousness of inferiority and a sense of not belonging, giving rise to what has been characterised as 'a territorialised and ethnicised definition of citizenship and national identity.' The booming plantation economy led to economic migration and land expropriation that was facilitated by the colonial authorities to satisfy the growing need for labour (Manby 2009). For instance, large numbers of voluntary workers were compulsorily collected from Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) and brought to Côte d'Ivoire to work as plantation labourers and construction gangs, constructing the critical infrastructure in southern Côte d'Ivoire (Zongo 2001). Particularly, the railway company was granted special subsidies to transport the labour, free of charge to the south of Côte d'Ivoire (Akindes 2004). The migration of labour was facilitated by a tacit agreement between inter-professional trade unions in Côte d'Ivoire and traditional chiefs in Burkina Faso to ensure free supply of workers (Nana 1993).

Furthermore, some analysts have argued that ethnicity became central to the colonial policy of divide-and-rule tactics for the purpose of political control, enforcement of tax collection and the general extraction of wealth (Broch-Vue 2005). This strategy enabled France to drive a wedge between ethnic groups by *ad hoc* and selective provision of preferential treatment to some identified groups through the appointment of local authorities or staff in the colonial administration. In effect, the deliberate colonial manipulation of identity; particularly ethnicity bequeathed postcolonial African societies with the con-

tentious polarities of settler (migrant) and native (indigenous) categories. This became the axis upon which ethnicity and identity rotated in colonial states and the postcolony (Mamdani 1996: 206).

Thus, postcolonial African states inherited ethnic stereotypes and divisive patterns of power relations between specific ethnic identities, thus sowing the seeds of competition and conflict along particular ethnic fault-lines (Hagg and Kagwanja 2007: 15–16). It is in this regard that, Mahmood Mamdani argues that the upsurge of political conflicts with ethnic or identity characteristics are the manifestations of the brutal legacy of manipulation of ethnicity in the colonial period now returning to haunt the postcolonial state (Mamdani 2001). Furthermore, Ayoob argues that, attempts at state-making in the third world have been immeasurably difficult, with the security predicament of the postcolonial state being more acute due to the distortions introduced by colonialism into the processes of state-formation (Ayoob 1995: 34).

In addition, colonialism contributed to the nurturing of a political culture whose influence cannot be discounted in the Ivorian crisis. Cyril Daddieh (2001) for example, argues that Ivorian political culture has been nurtured by nearly half a century of political dominance by southern elites and superior-subordinate relationships inherent in their control of power and hiring of cheap migrant and northern labour as either domestic servants or farm labourers. This relationship has produced an ingrained political culture that stereotypes northerners and Muslims (*Dioulas*) as untrustworthy. Hence, a political credo has emerged among southern elites that northerners such as Allasane Dramane Ouattara must never be entrusted with political power. The negative influence of colonialism has been compounded by the politicisation of ethnicity, especially in the post-independence era whereby politicians use their positions of power to exploit negative sentiments arising from such marginalisation. This often results in conflicts, due to discontentment of groups who have been ostracised government (Suberu 2003).

Political manipulation of ethnicity has since been a tradition in African politics and deep-seated ethnic prejudices tend to override feelings of national identity. Peter Kagwanja, for example has argued that the introduction of pluralist democracies in Africa has resulted in incumbent politicians resorting to the use of identity-based violence as a ploy to undermine democratic processes and keep themselves in power (Kagwanja 2001). Many postcolonial patrimonial leaders continued the colonial policy of divide-and-rule to tighten their grip on power. It is obvious that patrimonial systems led to the exclusion of rival or 'outsider' identities, unequal development and widespread disaffection (Hagg and Kagwanja 2007).

Nonetheless, through one-party states or no-party military regimes, some patrimonial leaders nearly succeeded in keeping the lid on simmering inter-ethnic divisions and animosities. However, the opening up of the politi-

cal spectrum has led to far-reaching social, political and economic change in Africa. This has resulted in the exploitation of ethnicity for the sake of political survival (Appollos 2001). Particularly, democratisation and economic reforms associated with the international financial institutions' Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) led to the erosion of the earlier postcolonial African states' claim to unencumbered power (Young 2004: 43). Moreover, globalisation and the decline of the hegemonic state in Africa opened the flood-gates for rival ethnic groups to challenge the authority of the central state and ruling elites (Appadurai 1998, in Hagg and Kagwanja).

THE POSTCOLONIAL STATE UNDER HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY

In its first two decades of independence, Côte d'Ivoire's remarkable economic growth was often termed as the 'African Miracle.' During this period, the country enjoyed political stability in spite of occasional challenges by students and members of the armed forces to the generally conservative, business-oriented outlook of Houphouët-Boigny's regime (Cocodia 2008). Its economic prosperity attracted large migrant populations from contiguous states such as Burkina Faso and Mali. In recognition of the crucial role of this large migrant population, particularly, the labour force they provided to the agro-based economy, Houphouët-Boigny adopted an open-door policy to migrants to work in the cocoa, copra and coffee plantations, and also extended citizenship rights to migrants (Yéré 2007).

This move reinforced the postcolonialist state, in particular, the plantation economy in the creation of clearly crystallised forms of political identification or ethnicised definition of citizenship and national identity (Dembélé 2002). Houphouët's immigration policy enabled the Ivorian economy to tap into a sub-regional labour supply. Therefore, the problem of immigration eventually became a political issue and thus compelled each political party to define itself in relation to the policy of economic openness (Akindes 2004).

In spite of the deep-seated ethno-regional cleavages, Houphouët-Boigny was able to hold the country together with an enviable record of economic growth and political stability, through his paternalistic politics, patronage and co-optation of real or perceived political challengers (Akindes 2004). For instance, efforts were made to balance senior political appointments in order to avoid a build-up of ethnic, regional and religious tensions among the diverse population (Sommerville 2006). Houphouët-Boigny's overarching authority coupled with a blossoming economy and common sense diplomacy ensured that most groups were adequately represented in government, eliciting respect from his people, and resulted in ethnic cohesion during his 30-year rule (Cocodia 2008).

Nevertheless, his authoritarian rule made it impossible to institutionalise transparent and democratic governance institutions following the return of the country to multi-party democracy in the 1990s (Nanjui 1995). In the milieu of dwindling economic fortunes, the death of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, and the absence of a comprehensive succession plan re-ignited the latent socio-political tensions in the country.

POST-HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY AND THE POLITICS OF IVOIRITÉ

Upon the death of Houphouët-Boigny in December 1993, a struggle for power ensued within the ruling party PDCI, between Henri Konan Bédié, the President of the National Assembly and Prime Minister Alassane Dramane Ouattara. Bédié outmanoeuvred his rival, Ouattara and assumed the presidency in line with the constitution. He subsequently instigated the concept of Ivoirité. This was actually a concept originally used in a nationalist sense for independence but was narrowed for political expediency and eventual exploitation for personal gain. Thus politicisation of identity and citizenship by successive political elites, particularly with the introduction of Ivoirité, eventually ended in internecine political crisis.

The doctrine of Ivoirité is often traced to the works of some southern intellectual and politicians in their attempt to define Ivorian identity. Ivoirité is the set of socio-historical, geographical and linguistic data by which an individual can be classified as a citizen of Côte d'Ivoire or Ivoirian. Thus, a person is deemed Ivorian if he or she is born of Ivorian parents belonging to one of the ethnic groups native to Côte d'Ivoire (Akindes 2004). The ethnicisation of this nationalism derives its integral meaning from the firmly ethnological and exclusive approach of this definition (Akindes 2004). The concept posits a controversial distinction between 'indigenous' Ivoirians and Ivoirians of immigrant descent' (Marshall-Fratani 2006). By this people of northern origin, Dioulas, were lumped together with immigrants from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea.

The true 'Ivoiriness' of the Dioulas, was cast in doubt due to their shared identity in terms of family names and religion with people from the north of Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea (Akindes 2004). This roused xenophobic and anti-northerner sentiments within the Ivorian society (Bah 2010). The *we-versus-them* rhetoric triggered growing pockets of conflicts and tensions that pitted citizens who considered themselves true Ivorians (or *indigenes*) against those of migrant descent regarded as settlers or 'second-class citizens' (Danso 2011).

Although Bédié had claimed that the concept was principally aimed at creating a sense of unity among all the diverse people living in Cote d'Ivoire, it was obvious that the narrow exploitation of ethno-nationalism was the underly-

ing motive of proponents of Ivoirité. Akindes argues that tribal Ivoirité under Bédié implicitly tended to safeguard the position of the Akans, which as a result of democratisation were losing influence in the increasingly competitive race for control of the state machinery (Akindes 2004: 28). The initial version of the Ivoirité was inherited from Houphouëtism's natural predisposition of the Akan to govern others. This predisposition was legitimated socially by over four decades of experience of Akan leadership under Houphouët-Boigny (Akindes 2004).

Ivoirité also sought to valorise Christianity as the historically adopted culture; an element in the making of political identity, to further minimise the Muslim identity as a socio-cultural component of Ivorian social diversity. Since Muslims account for about 86 per cent of the immigrant population in Cote d'Ivoire, there was the fear which was given credence by the Report of the Social and Economic Council in 1998 (Conseil Economique et Social), that the influx of Muslim immigrants had considerably modified the pre-existing religious balance.

The report further argues that 'an upset in the balance of this sort, in such a sensitive sphere, could lead some people to endeavour to exploit religious affiliation for political ends, which is a disservice to national harmony and unity, and a threat to the social peace so dear to our country' (Report of the Conseil Economique et Social, 1998, cited in Akindes 2004). The concept was institutionalised when the Ivorian electoral code was amended with the provision stating that candidates of presidential elections must be of 'purely' Ivorian parentage.

The electoral code further stipulated that candidates must have lived in Cote d'Ivoire for a period of five years prior to the elections (Langer 2010). Thus, it is widely held that the concept was specifically inserted into the Ivorian body politic for political reasons; to prevent Ouattara, whose father is said to have hailed from Burkina Faso from contesting elections in 1995. The introduction of Ivoirité had deeper social implications than the political motives anticipated by its proponents. It went beyond barring Ouattara because it appeared to be a tactic designed initially to exclude specific individuals from the political process, thus fuelling xenophobic sentiments and legitimising calls for the exclusion of whole groups (Whitaker 2005). It also led to the erosion of the social and cultural status of northern Ivoirians, predominantly Muslims who constitute about a third (34%) of the population, making them de facto second-class citizens (Langer 2010).

The concept later trickled into other sectors of the Ivorian society, such as national identification, land tenure, and public sector employment policies (Bah 2010). For instance, in 1998, two new laws were enacted that gave credence to the concept of Ivoirité. The National Assembly voted to prohibit foreigners from owning land, thus nullifying the property rights they were accorded un-

der Houphouët-Boigny's rule (Human Rights Watch 2001). This created social tension within the larger populace, particularly northerners who felt marginalised. Akindes sums up the impact of Ivoirité on the Ivoirian society thus:

Ivoirité sowed the seed of mutual paranoia, impoverished the foundations of community life, and produced an Ivorian society increasingly marked by fear, because it included communities who began to be frightened of each other on the basis of identities that used to be permeable but which were gradually becoming fixed' (Akindes 2004, p.30).

Furthermore, grievances within armed forces stemmed out of the gradual decline in the economy and the domination of southern ethnic group in the politico-administrative sector, as well as the military, triggered a coup d'état led by General Robert Gueï in December 1999. The concept was subsequently embraced by successive political leaders Robert Gueï and Laurent Gbagbo, for the same purpose of political expediency. With the coming into power of Gueï, who was from the Yacouba ethnic group, this was perceived as a blow to the project of the proponents of Ivoirité to preserve Akan hegemony. Under Gueï, the concept of Ivoirité underwent a conceptual change, to a broader inclusion of people from the south, centre and west, while remaining exclusionary to the people from the north, or Diuolas, whose collective Ivorian identity remained in doubt (Akindes 2004). Gueï in particular, led a referendum in 2000 which amended the constitution with a provision that only people born by both parents being Ivoirians could stand for political office.

By this provision, Ouattara and 13 other contestants were disqualified from the October 2000 elections, leaving him and Laurent Gbagbo as the leading contenders (Bekoe 2010). Nonetheless, Gueï's attempt to rig the elections proved unsuccessful as he was chased out of the country by a mob protest at the behest of Gbagbo. This paved the way for Gbagbo to assume the presidency. Gbagbo continued Bédié's *Ivoirité* policies by favouring the predominantly southern 'pure' Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) supporters at the expense of the largely-northern, 'mixed heritage' supporters of the Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR) (ICG, 2011). Ethnic, regional and religious tensions in the country since continued unabated. After several peace agreements, the Ouagadougou peace Agreement was reached in 2007.

This agreement, in contrast to earlier ones, acknowledged the underlying issue of citizenship or identity as a major cause of the conflict and thus made provision to directly address it (Ouagadougou Peace Agreement was reached in 2007). The protagonists agreed to provide credentials to all Ivoirians who did not have proper identity documents and establish a reliable system of identification. Furthermore, the agreement called for the establishment of mobile courts to issue birth certificates to individuals born in Cote d'Ivoire who have never

been registered at the registry office (Ouagadougou Peace Agreement, 2007, Article 1.1.2). A standard identification process was also outlined to issue new national identity cards or 'identification as the basis of the new electoral roll' (Article, 1.3). Subsequently, a cease-fire agreement was reached between Gbagbo and New Forces which eventually placed the country into a protracted 'no-war, no-peace' situation until the 2010 election.

THE 2010 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND POST-ELECTION DEBACLE

The quest for sustainable peace and stability remains elusive in Cote d'Ivoire despite several efforts by the international community to find a lasting solution to the intractable political crisis. After several postponements, elections held in October/November 2010 were considered as a landmark towards consolidating democratic peace and stability in the country. The UN-supervised presidential election held in October 2010 could not produce an outright winner. This necessitated a second round on 28 November, between the two leading political parties of Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) and Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR), led by incumbent Laurent Gbagbo and opposition leader Alassane Ouattara respectively.

After initial delays in the release of the results, the head of the Independent Electoral Commission, declared Ouattara as the winner, with 54.1 per cent of the vote, while Gbagbo garnered 45.9 per cent. The presidential election was deemed to have met international standards despite political skirmishes and irregularities. Ouattara was duly recognised by the international community as the president-elect of Cote d'Ivoire. Immediately, after this declaration the Ivorian Constitutional Council which is alleged to be packed with allies of Gbagbo annulled the results on the grounds of massive irregularities and voter fraud in several rebel-controlled northern areas deemed as pro-Ouattara constituencies. Subsequently, Gbagbo was declared winner with 51.4 per cent and 48.5 per cent of the vote cast for Ouattara.

Interestingly both Gbagbo and Ouattara laid claim to the presidency of the country and ran rival administrations, until the eventual capture of Gbagbo on 11 April 2011, by pro-Ouattara forces aided by French special forces, Licorne. The political stalemate aggravated by deep-seated bitter social and political tensions led to increased violence in the country (IRIN, 2011). Over a thousand civilian lives were lost to sporadic violence by pro-government and rebel forces. Particularly, there were reports of genocidal intent with killings in areas such as the south-western town of Duekoue, where over about 800 people largely perceived as supporters of Gbagbo were reported to have been murdered during an assault on the town by rebel forces loyal to Ouattara. As a result of the deteriorating humanitarian crisis, over a million people have either been internally

displaced or forced to flee as refugees in neighbouring countries such as Ghana and Liberia.

TOGO: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Togo has a peculiar colonial history. It was first a German territory until the defeat of the German forces by the allied Anglo-French Forces during the First World War in 1914. A League of Nations mandate and later UN trusteeship put the country under control of the UK and France as separate protectorates. This split divided the Ewe ethnic group, triggering Ewe nationalism and subsequent drive for unification by the Sylvanus Olympio-led *Comite de l'Unite Togolaise* (Hagen and Spearing 2000). Following a plebiscite in 1956 the people of the British protectorate joined the soon to be independent Gold Coast (Ghana). The French portion became Togo under French rule, until it attained independence from France in 1960.

UN supervised elections brought Sylvanus Olympio to power in 1961 as the first president. However, he was overthrown and assassinated in a coup d'état by veterans of the French colonial army under Sergeant Etienne Gnassingbe. The coup makers were mostly soldiers of northern origin who had fought on the side of the French in the Algerian Independence war, and were refused entry into the Togolese army because Olympio considered them to have betrayed the African liberation movement (Mac-Ogonor et al., 2009). The coup was believed to have been instigated by the former French colonial power due to Olympios's endeavours to move the country towards a position of non-alignment and economic independence from France.

Togo is a heterogeneous country of about 36 ethnic groups, which is characterised by a north-south divide. While the south is made up of diverse groups such as Ewe, Mina, Ana, the north is inhabited by several groups such as the Kabre (Kabye) and Kotokoli. During colonialism, the people from the south benefited from commercial and educational advantages. Therefore, the Ewe, Mina and Ana, in particular, are considered as the commercial and intellectual elite. They were recruited to fill skilled administrative positions required to run the colonial state. However, people from the northern part are made up of diverse ethnic groups as well as a migrant population from neighbouring Burkina Faso.

By the time of independence, Ewes played a significant role in the country's civil service and dominated it politically, while the northern such as the Kabre suffered economic deprivation, illiteracy, and limited educational and social opportunities. Yet, the Kabres and other northerners had been recruited for military service under French rule, and the Togolese army at independence mostly consisted of ethnic Kabre (Yagla 1976; Minority at Risk Project, 2006). This colonial legacy has created a disparity between the north and south of

the country. Thus the southerners, especially the Ewe and Mina are seen to be economically and politically superior due to their dominance in the economic and civil service sector; the political dispensation of Togo, stemming from the north-south divide in the country has been characterised by political upheavals and exclusionary politics.

In 1967, Eyadema overthrew the government of Nicholas Grunitzky and declared Togo as a de facto one-party state with his Rally of Togolaise People (RPT), as the sole political party (Mac-Ogonor et al., 2009). Eyadema was able to institutionalise autocratic rule while enjoying the support of major international donors due to his pro-Western stance during the Cold War (Dirk, 2007). For more than three decades, Togo's political and economic life were organised along ethnic lines with Eyadema appointing members of his ethnic group, the Kabye to key positions in the military, economic institutions and the civil service. Eyadema developed an ethnic geopolitical system based on a rather simplistic division of the country into the 'backward' north and the 'developed' south (Toulabor 2008:304).

This was taken a step further by the pursuance of a policy of economic support for the development of northern Togo. This policy intervention sought to correct the historical imbalance in development (Hagen & Spearing 2000). It is in this regard that Toulabor argues that, under the pretext of 'avenging' the population of the north against those of the south, the alleged beneficiaries of colonialism, Eyadema directed most of economic development policy at his own ethnic group, the Kabye, and to a lesser degree, at other northern ethnic groups (Toulabor 2008: 304). Therefore, Eyadema's 38-year dictatorship led to consolidation of power of the Kabre ethnic group as an advantaged minority (Minority At Risk Project, 2006). Throughout Eyadema's regime, the political landscape of Togo was dominated by dictatorship, politics of patronage, co-optation, intimidation, elimination of major political opponents and political upheavals. He effectively used this disproportionate influence over the military to stave off any serious opposition to his regime. As a result, the country was in a state of uneasy peace due to fear imposed by the state security and paramilitary forces of the regime.

THE NORTHERN PROBLEM AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN TOGO

From the 1990s when the clamour for democratisation became conterminous with international aid in Africa, Eyadema was compelled to allow for a National Constitutional Conference held in July in 1991. Following heated public debate about the repressive nature of Eyadema's regime, the meeting dominated by opposition parties mostly of southern or Ewe origin condemned the human rights violations of the Eyadema regime and subsequently stripped Eyadema of

certain presidential powers. An interim government was installed with Kokou Koffigou as the Prime Minister (Seely 2005). This event opened the door to a decade of political chaos in Togo, as Eyadema and his loyalist security and supporters fought back.

Characteristically, a coup was staged against the interim government in December 1991. This event came with brutal repression of anti-government demonstrations as well as political persecution of opponents in the following two years. An increase in violent identity related conflicts, particularly between the two rival ethnic groups—Ewe and Kabre—led to hundreds of deaths and large numbers of refugees (Minority at Risk Project, 2006). This triggered a wave of migration of political refugees numbering over 350000 into neighbouring countries such as Ghana and Benin (Dirk 2007).

Eyadema subsequently resorted to draconian tactics to hold on to power until his demise in 2005. Presidential elections which were obviously flawed were held in 1993, 1998 and 2003. Equally questionable parliamentary elections of 1994, 1999 and 2002, which were highly criticised by the international community, resulted in the consolidation of the power of Eyadema and the Gnassingbe clan (Dirk 2007). His death threatened to plunge Togo into chaos. The despotic power structure of the Gnassingbe clan which had been deeply ingrained in the political and social fabric of the society, was brought to the fore with a 'father-to-son' transition, a violation of the Togolese Constitution (Dirk 2007). In the absence of the head of state, the president of the National Assembly was mandated by the Constitution to serve in an interim capacity for a 60-day period within which elections should be held for a new head of state. However, with the support of the army, mostly Eyadema's tribesmen and loyalists, the parliament, packed with mainly members of the ruling party RPT, deposed the president of the National Assembly, Fambare Ouattara Natchaba, who was constitutionally mandated to an interim presidency and replaced with Faure Gnassingbe, one of the sons of the late president and a Member of Parliament and Government Minister (Ebeku 2005).

This paved the way for Faure to assume the presidency of the country. The National Assembly also amended the Constitution to remove the 60-day mandatory requirement for the conduct of the presidential election, thereby making it possible for Faure Gnassingbe to remain in office as acting President until the end of his late father's tenure in 2008. This transfer of power was rejected by members of the opposition and the international community as unconstitutional and unacceptable (Appiagyei-Atua 2005). However, having changed the Constitution and with the country's military on his side, Faure initially appeared determined to succeed his father (Aning and Bah 2009). This prompted Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and AU to intervene by calling for an immediate end to the unconstitutional 'father-to-son' transition and a restoration of the old Constitution. It suspended Togo

from all its activities, imposed targeted sanctions on members of the regime and even threatened military intervention (Mac-Ogonor et al., 2009). ECOWAS succeeded in brokering a deal that saw Faure step aside, and the deputy speaker, Abas Bonfoh, of the National Assembly assume the presidency. Presidential elections, subsequently won by Faure Gnassingbe, were held in 60 days in line with the constitution.

However, the elections were not devoid of complaints by the fragmented opposition about the short notice, as the 60 days included time spent negotiating with Faure to relinquish power (Aning and Bah 2009; Mac-Ogonor et al., 2009). There were also complaints about irregularities in the process. More worrying, throughout the entire transition process were reports of widespread violence, massive repression and human rights violations. For instance the Togolese Human Rights League (LTDH) reported the deaths of about 811 people since the death of Eyadema, of which 790 were killed during the elections. Again, street protests by opposition supporters after the declaration of Faure's doubtful victory were met with acts of counter violence by security forces and pro-government militia (Dirk 2007).

An estimated 40 000 peoples were displaced and forced to flee as political refugees (Kirk 2010). Nonetheless, the assumption of office of Faure Gnassingbe, under the auspices of the international community, several months of negotiations between the government and the exiled opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio of the Union of Forces for Change (UFC), culminated in an agreement in August 2006 to form a government of national unity. The agreement also included measures to revamp the electoral commission, facilitation of the return of refugees who fled the political violence after the 2005 elections, and more importantly reform of the Kabre-dominated security forces. However, it is not very clear if provisions have been faithfully implemented.

Indeed, it is also difficult to ascertain the extent to which this political agreement has contributed to easing of social and political tensions in the country. Faure completed his first tenure of office and was re-elected in 2010. Although, there have not been full-blown conflicts, political tensions largely motivated by politics of identities have continued unabated in Togo. For instance there is the fear among northern groups, particularly the Kabre that if the Ewe-led opposition parties take over the reins of power in the unstable democracy, most likely the Kabre would suffer retaliatory discrimination and violence. It is therefore obvious that Kabre would resort to militancy against a Ewe political leadership.

CONCLUSION

It is indeed true that the political map of Africa is a colonial creation with little regard to the historic ethnic homelands or the ethnic composition of the subject

population. Today, these artificial boundaries or multi-ethnic nations lack the internal political cohesion necessary for survival as nations. Ali Mazrui asserts that most of Africa's conflicts are partly caused by the fact that the colonially created borders enclosed groups with no traditions of shared authority or shared systems of settling dispute (Mazrui 2010).

As a result of the deep-seated societal cleavages, politics in Africa obviously engenders social exclusion, political marginalisation, and bad governance, thereby resulting in irreconcilable conflicts. Thus politics of exclusion, particularly the politicisation of identity, however, real or imagined has been a major contributory factor to the security predicament being witnessed across the continent. While countries such as Côte d'Ivoire have reached the melting point by experiencing full-blown conflicts or protracted political crisis, others such as Togo, despite instances of low-scale political instability in the past, are in the state of fragile peace, which if not effectively managed could result in an upsurge of violent conflicts. It is interesting that from the analysis above, that discourses of autochthony employed in Africa's political dispensation to either exclude or include other groups, from political power and the socio-economic dividends associated with it have made both international and domestic efforts at promoting democratic peace and stability in Africa very challenging.

Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni struggle and the logic of spectacle

Austin Tam-George

INTRODUCTION

In many of his writings, Ken Saro-Wiwa, the slain Nigerian dissident writer and minority rights activist, shows a consistent preoccupation with the burdens of minority citizenship in a multi-ethnic state. In Nigeria's vast political and cultural landscape, Saro-Wiwa's Ogoni are a small peasant community in the South Eastern tip of the Niger Delta region – a region where for half a century, the oil drilling activities of transnational companies have caused environmental and cultural dislocation. In his texts such as *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English* (1985), *On a Darkling Plain: An account of the Nigerian Civil War* (1989), *Prisoners of Jebs* (1989), *Pita Dumbrok's Prison* (1991), etc., Saro-Wiwa uses a range of literary devices such as irony and sarcasm, repudiation and contradiction, as well as revision, ruse and satire to expose and challenge what he saw as the tyranny of Nigeria's nationalist modernity.

But as he observes in his detention diary *A Month and a Day* (1995), literature's impact on the psychology of tyranny particularly in Africa could be painfully slow as rulers choose to ignore writers, aware that the majority of the people were unable to read and write. To press their message home, Saro-Wiwa believes that writers must also be involved in mass movements. As Saro-Wiwa puts it, the writer:

[M]ust establish direct contact with the people and resort to the strength of African literature – oratory in the tongue. For the word is power and more powerful is it when expressed in common currency. That is why a writer who takes part in mass organizations will deliver his message more effectively than one who only writes waiting for time to work its literary wonders (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 81).

From 1990, after his literary and other imaginative arguments for a new grammar of citizenship had failed to alter mainstream political attitudes in Nigeria, Ken Saro-Wiwa tried to redirect his campaigns to the grassroots as a way of galvanising communal support and participation. A milestone of this phase

of his activism was the formation in 1990 of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), a community-based mass mobilisation organisation aimed at galvanising the Ogoni to resist the continued denigration of their environment by the oil conglomerate Shell, and to demand justice and fair representation in the Nigerian state through non-violent means.

As a mass movement, MOSOP itself was an umbrella body to several other social and cultural organisations throughout the Ogoni Kingdom. Under the platform of MOSOP, Ken Saro-Wiwa and the leadership hierarchy composed a document called the Ogoni Bill of Rights, where they catalogued the many deprivations of Ogoni as an oil-bearing community, and demanded reparations from the Nigerian state and Shell (Saro-Wiwa, 1995: 67–70).

Key demands in the *Ogoni Bill of Rights* include (a) the political control of Ogoni affairs by Ogoni people, (b) the right to control and use of a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development, (c) adequate and direct representation, as a right in all Nigerian institutions, and (d) the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation. This document was forwarded to the Nigerian government, and ignored. Subsequently, MOSOP under Saro-Wiwa organised protests, vigils, demonstrations, election boycotts, and organisation of seminars, mass enlightenment campaigns, local and international media campaigns, composition of petitions to the United Nations Organisation, and campaigns for the review of the Nigerian Constitution.

In this chapter, the author examines how the Ogoni used demonstrations, boycotts, petitions, and so forth, as counter-narrative forms possessing ‘a formative energy in the dynamic of history’ (Sfez: 1999, cited in Colin Caret). Since demonstrations and protest marches help to mobilise people and serve to channel diverse oppositional sentiments, I will interpret these forms as elemental sites of popular sovereignty. Furthermore, how dissenting groups negotiate their relationship with Nigeria’s nationalist laws in their struggles for a more egalitarian society will be examined.

Moreover, the Ogoni struggle launched in the early 1990s appears to have inspired the moral comradeship of many groups and communities around the world in a way that some other dissident movements have not. It is therefore important to examine the significance of this struggle to our understanding of a dissident culturalist discourse in Africa and beyond. Throughout this article, the author uses a term, the *aesthetics of spectacle* – a cardinal feature of the theatre, as the main interpretive idiom to examine how Ogoni communal refusal was mobilised against a national and transnational technology of oppression.

In general terms, the act of spectacle (from *Specere*, a Latin word meaning ‘to look at’) involves the act of putting things on display, of letting things be seen. But as a feature of representational politics particularly in its oppositional forms, spectacle acquires a more semantic and insurrectional weight by point-

ing to a refusal to conceal a social plight or, quite simply, a dramatic declaration of dissent. In their tussles with dominant modes of power, marginal narratives frequently resort to the use of spectacle as a way of dramatising deeply sedimented grievances in the open arena of discursive relations. Since dominant discourses tend mainly to suppress the representation of marginal experiences from popular knowledge, minoritarian narratives try to overcome their suppression through a dramatic display of refusal. In this way, narratives such as carnivals, riots, demonstrations, rallies, boycotts, voice votes, public nudity, suicide bombing, and walk-outs when used counter-discursively, emerge as ways of spectacularising grievance and protest.

In the Niger Delta of Nigeria where the denial of the right to resource and ecological control is the tonic force behind various acts of dissidence, the peoples' protests frequently take the form of *carnival*. Carnivals are forms of melodrama staged mainly to mock and undermine dominant ideas and practices, and the value structures that support them. Always rich in mimicry, pretence, imitation and disguise, carnivals function as a jovial formalisation of dissent. Among the Ogoni, the Ogoni Day carnival held annually on 4 January is the most important date in the community's agitational calendar, with over 300000 Ogoni men, women and children participating in the first Ogoni Day carnival in 1993. A month later, on 27 February of the same year, thousands of Ogoni converged at the launch of the One Naira Ogoni Survival Fund (ONUSUF) where ordinary Ogoni publicly demonstrated their commitment by donating the token sum of one Naira (the Nigerian currency) to the communal struggle.

During these carnivals, all differences of class, age, status, gender and education are momentarily suspended. Here, the clown and the reveller may interact and play with the king, the rich may feast and mingle with the poor in the community, as oppositional bonds and networks are strengthened and concretised. In the songs and speeches given during this momentary rebirth of culture, the power of the state to frustrate the aspirations of a people is mocked as the oppressed try to reaffirm their humanity through the idiom of playful seriousness. All the energetic drumming, stumping, singing and masquerading that characterise such carnivals may be seen as acts of cultural assertion by a community faced with cultural extinction. But they are also part of the broad Ogonian hymnology of resistance. The Ogoni folk song '*Aaken, aaken, Ogoni aaken*' (Arise, arise, Ogoni arise), sung at almost every such gathering, clearly illustrates this point.

In his influential study on the insurrectionary merits of the carnival as a site of popular sovereignty, Mikhail Bakhtin (1965) points to its de-hierarchising power, the ability of the people during carnival both to parody and challenge the immutable codes and ordinances of official power. As Bakhtin puts it, 'While carnival lasts, there is no other life outside it. During carnival time life is subject to its own laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom' (Bakhtin 1965: 7.) The car-

nival, Bakhtin writes, 'was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed.'

In Ogoni, many popular anti-authoritarian events such as the annual Ogoni Day carnival are celebrated with passion and pageantry in a way that suggests a communal yearning for an alternative utopia. During these carnivals, the community itself tends to emerge as a differentiated habitat of power in which the totalising powers of the state are momentarily overruled. An Ogoni participant in one such gathering told this writer with ungrammatical finality: 'They cannot fit to kill Ogoni today. They cannot fit to kill Ogoni tomorrow. Ogoni will remain here forever, because this is our land.'¹ The logic of the carnival, then, was to perform and spectacularise this communal determination to outlive all odds.

In his address to the mammoth carnival of the Ogoni in 1993 at the Ogoni Survival Fund launch during which an unprecedented 700 000 Naira was raised, Ken Saro-Wiwa expressed similar sentiments on the resilience of the Ogoni counter-narrative, when he said:

[W]e are witnessing the birth of a new phenomenon, the decision of a small group of people that they will not tolerate their dehumanization even by people of the same colour of skin. And that all the guns in the world, the casuistry of dictatorship and the threat of death and imprisonment cannot deter a people determined to secure their God-given rights and protect their inheritance (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 151).

But if the struggle to save the land and protect its sanctity was framed in such absolute terms by the community, it may be because in Ogoni as in most communities in the Niger Delta, the land was seen not only as part of a cultural inheritance, but also as an integral part of a community's spiritual ecology. Thus, the destruction of the land was perceived by the people as the death of culture – the sentencing of the community to spiritual perdition. In such a context, communal resistance tended to take the shape of a life-and-death struggle.

Yet from its beginnings, the Ogoni struggle had been conceived in line with the Ghandhian principle of non-violence. This meant that like all non-violent narratives, this was a communal struggle propelled only by the perceived power of its moral argument and the creativity of its methods of engagement. The challenge was to find the appropriate mechanism through which the people's sentiments may be expressed. In choosing the technique of spectacle among others, Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni hoped to etch the Ogoni plight indelibly on the national memory. Through melodrama, playful ruse, demonstrations and other forms of theatre, they sought to compel both the state and transnational capital into a new moral contract with the Ogoni community; a contract in which justice and equity would be the principles of material relations.

In addition to the annual carnivals of protest, therefore, the Ogoni also used street marches and riots as part of their attempt to reclaim their control of the environment and to protect their farms and sacred grounds from the ravages of oil exploitation. The riots were staged sporadically near Shell's production sites all over Ogoni land in order to protest against the latest toxic spills from production pipelines; or even in Port Harcourt, the oil metropolis, where they protested particular instances of injustice such as the arrests of community leaders. But as the state became more brutal and repressive of dissent, particularly in the early and mid 1990s during Nigeria's dark moments of military rule, the Ogoni became even more defiant in their demonstrations and riots.

A watershed moment in these riots happened in April 1993 when Shell's attempt to lay oil pipelines across village farms and living premises in the Ogoni community of Biara was resisted by a crowd of protesting women and youth who waived mainly palm twigs and sang struggle songs. Despite the killings and arrests of some protesters by state forces, thousands of Ogoni protesters massed at Biara, forcing Shell to abandon its projects and refrain from utilising Ogoni land.

Now, although riots and demonstrations are sometimes viewed by official discourses as acts of lawlessness which must be suppressed or dispersed, it is in fact possible to cognise these forms of social expression as processes through which perceptions of power are dramatised by individuals and groups operating within a social milieu. As social acts, demonstrations function as discursive practices once they relate in one way or another to the dominant order of power. If they are used against the grain of hegemonic thought, as in the Ogoni context, then demonstrations become a tactic of disidentification because they open new frontiers of action foreclosed by dominant power.

In his brilliant study of the purposes of riots and revolts by African Americans in the United States of America, Falaiye (2003: 145–57) makes the point that rather than be seen as mere acts of lawlessness and criminality, riots may be understood as part of the discourses of resistance used by racially and economically marginalised groups to register their rejection of the legitimacy of a system that dehumanises them. Through riots and other acts of civil disobedience, Falaiye argues, the entire value structure which supported the intolerable conditions in which black people were forced to live was challenged.

But demonstrations function as forms of narrative practice in yet another sense: more than any other form, it is these practices that generate the spectacle through which we actually see and hear the many micro-stories of a people's disenchantment with the dominant order of things. Indeed riots may be understood as acts of narration because they 'speak' of a people's disaffection; as the demonstrators converge we could almost feel a critical synthesis of social anger. As more and more people pour onto the streets to join in the procession of the oppressed, demonstrators are able to transfigure individualist anger and

deprivation into a communal and even trans-communal energy. And as they dramatise their grievances, we witness the formation of a new organism of sovereignty outside what is seen as the illicit politics of subjugation.

Under Nigeria's laws, all land and mineral resources wherever they may be located are owned by a central authority – the state – which is then tightly controlled by a small, often unaccountable cabal. Through their surrogates across the land, they are able to create an illusion of governmentality. By appealing incessantly to notions of nationalism, the state hoped to deaden the impulse for active citizenship and to seduce its citizens into passivity and subjection, in thrall to the 'nation.' Through its structures of power, particularly its armed forces, the state imposed a uniformity of perception around practices in harmony with the ideas of the dominant groups which hold and exercise power within it.

The ability of such discourse to persuade fragmentary groups across vast swathes of territory 'where practices would otherwise be conditioned by narratives, discourses and theories deriving from greatly different interpretive traditions to diverse regional experience' is what Richard Peet calls a narrative's *hegemonic extent* (See also Terdiman 1985, Marais 2001, Chomsky 2002: 313–317).

But the disidentificatory practices enacted by groups such as the Ogoni were significant because they challenged the state's nationalist homology, by pointing to a dissimilar nucleus of radical citizenship within the 'nation.' Through their acts of refusal, they sought to create a different discursive territory in which an alternative rhetoric of nationhood was thinkable. This rhetoric drew attention to the principles of liberty, cultural freedom and the respect for community property rights, while questioning the dominant assumptions of the state. When the Ogoni chant '*Aaken, aaken, Ogoni aaken*' (Arise, arise, Ogoni arise), we see a community forging its own signs of communal citizenship in a land of counter-myth, outside the master signs of the nation.

But even in other practical terms, the Ogoni tried to step away from the state's rituals of power. On 12 June 1993 the Ogoni took a historic decision to boycott a national election – the only community in Nigeria to do so. In an interview before the elections, Ken Saro-Wiwa as one of the leaders of MOSOP, justified the decision for the boycott as follows:

I don't see any taking part at all. They (the Ogoni) will be foolish to do it. Why go to vote for somebody who is going to oppress and ruin you. The 1989 Constitution is a complete disaster. With all the amendments, even the structure of the country is wrong. What has Nigeria got to offer the Ogoni people except death under the 1989 Constitution?²

Whenever they are organised, elections served as one of the strategic processes by which a state may legitimise its powers. Therefore to participate in an elec-

toral process may mean to partake in a critical ritual of power, and to accept to be obedient to that power. But to *boycott* a process may imply a refusal of that process and its underlying assumptions.

As a narrative of refusal, boycotts are sometimes used by dissenting individuals and groups to inscribe disaffection and resistance. In his 1959 campaign for the economic ostracisation of Apartheid South Africa for example, Julius Nyerere, as the president of the Tanganyika Africa Union, canvassed for a global boycott of all South African goods. 'Can we honestly condemn a system and at the same time employ it to produce goods which we buy and enjoy with a clear conscience?' Nyerere asked.³ For Nyerere, boycotting South African goods was the only way in which 'we can give meaning to our abhorrence of the system.'

In discursive relations between individuals and groups, therefore, boycott could serve as a marker of interactional rupture, or a sign of a troubled relationship. Used in a political context by dissenting groups such as the Ogoni, boycott was an attempt to disrupt the smooth synchronicity of the state's hegemonic practices and to render them strategically incomplete. In taking the oath of office, the winners in the elections would swear to obey and protect the constitution, but the Ogoni were against a law which they believed sought to suppress them. By standing away from the state's hierarchising practices, the Ogoni sought to cast a symbolic vote against the state.

But it must be noted that the mobilisation of the Ogoni as a counter-narrative community by Ken Saro-Wiwa and other leaders was never itself unproblematic. From time to time, certain ideological and tactical cleavages emerged as the struggle took a radical turn. The first problem in this regard was that of communal authority.

Ogoni was a gerontocratic and 'traditional' society where leadership was expected from traditional chiefs, as well as from older and therefore 'wiser' individuals. The emergence of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), a mass organisation driven mainly by youthful and radical energy, clearly undermined this traditional structure of power. The result was always a methodological tension between the 'traditionalists' who favoured a more measured and compromising approach, and other activists who chose a radical modality of engagement with the oil giant Shell and the Nigerian state.

Indeed as tensions grew stronger within MOSOP itself, Garrick Leton, the inaugural president of the movement resigned over disagreements on the decision to boycott national elections in 1993. Leton and some MOSOP leaders such as Edward Kobani had reputations as mainstream politicians, and so wanted the Ogoni to participate in an integrative way in national politics. According to Saro-Wiwa, both leaders had also supported Shell's laying of a highly contentious oil pipeline network across the local land (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 174). Indeed on several occasions elite factions of the Ogoni community, purported to be have been encouraged by the state had issued statements ruinous to the

reputation of MOSOP. Shell itself had eagerly used these factional statements in its international campaigns to stigmatise Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP, and to try to demonstrate the incoherence of the Ogoni narrative (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 158–163).

It is striking that Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists were tried and eventually killed by the state, on the charge of inciting the public lynching of four Ogoni elders with whom he often strategically disagreed. Until his death, Saro-Wiwa strongly denied these allegations. But if as Wole Soyinka (1996: 151–2) says, the state ('the common enemy' is the description he uses) was itself complicit in the deaths of the four Ogoni elders, it would seem that the tussles within MOSOP among other factors provided the context for that complicity. Frequent personality clashes among MOSOP leaders, notably between Saro-Wiwa, Kobani, Leton, Albert Badey, and others, also served to exacerbate the tension within the movement.

But besides the ideological cleavages within MOSOP, the life and public personality of Ken Saro-Wiwa revealed similar contradictions. Saro-Wiwa was not always an anti-establishment critic, for he had worked with various military regimes in Nigeria and held high political positions. In the heat of the Nigerian civil war, Saro-Wiwa was appointed the Sole Administrator of the strategic oil port of Bonny by the Federal military government headed by Yakubu Gowon. Perhaps Saro-Wiwa's appointment spoke more to his closeness to the military and political hierarchy of the time than to any other consideration. As Sole Administrator he reported and accounted not to the people and leaders of Bonny, but to the unelected junta in Lagos.

When the Diète-Spiff military administration took over in the newly created Rivers State from 1968, Saro-Wiwa was again appointed to key cabinet positions. In fact, Saro-Wiwa was between 1968 and 1973 civil commissioner for such ministries as Works, Land and Transport; Education, and Information, Culture and Home Affairs, respectively. Similarly, during the infamous Ibrahim Babangida military era, Ken Saro-Wiwa was again appointed the national director of the Directorate of Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER). His main duty during this period was to mobilise Nigerians to support the policies of what was regarded as one of the most profligate and brutal military regimes in Nigeria. Saro-Wiwa later resigned from his post. But given this background, it is probably fair to note that formally or informally Ken Saro-Wiwa was close to the same structures of power against which he was later to struggle.

How might such complicities within Ogoni as a counter-narrative community be interpreted? In what ways do such complexities challenge our understanding of the nature of narratives of opposition? Here, Tejumola Olaniyan's observation elsewhere is cogent when he notes that in social movements 'there is always complicity, for the ground of resistance is veritably impure'

(1992: 47–55). In a similar way, James Ogude (1998: 33–34) has pointed out that even within such resistance groups as the Mau-Mau in Kenya, it was possible to find conflicting tendencies within its discursive structures.

It is possible, therefore, to interpret the leadership tensions in MOSOP on the question of boycott as reflecting the competing visions within the counter-narrative project itself. These tussles were about what specific response to adopt in relation to dominant power. The popular adoption of the motion to boycott the national election in 1993, even in the face of opposition from nationalist politicians within MOSOP, demonstrated the resilience of the radical vision within the movement.

Similarly, if as Frantz Fanon (1966: 180) suggests, a community's traditions become 'fundamentally unstable and are shot through by centrifugal tendencies' in moments of mass struggles, then the toppling of the traditional order of authority in Ogoni by MOSOP as a mass movement represented an attempt to open up new frontiers of popular sovereignty within Ogoni as a civic entity.

But the contradictions exhibited by MOSOP and its leaders also proved that oppositional discourses could, at a closer look, be multi-voiced and multi-directional. As they negotiate their relations with dominant systems of power, these discourses seem to embody a capacity to affirm and negate, as well as to constantly change their discursive positions at different moments in time. This is why in his study, Bakhtin alerts us to the ambivalence that is the stamp of the carnival. Carnival laughter, Bakhtin says, is 'gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of carnival' (1965: 12).

For example, in spite of MOSOP's strong mobilisational abilities and ideological attraction, there were in fact many individuals within the Ogoni community who remained radically indifferent to the Movement and its activities. These individuals preferred instead to operate against the state in different ways. They used everyday forms of resistance such as rumour-mongering, myth-making, tax evasion, disrespect for the state's symbols – its flag, anthems and institutions, and so forth. And there were yet others (called the 'vultures' in Ogoni agitational lingo) who simply consorted with the state and the oil consortiums against the interests of the community, in their quest for personal advantage.

For Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni community, therefore, the power relationship with the state was similar to what Foucault calls 'agonism' – a sort of complex interplay between 'the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom'. (2003: 139). Despite its various ambiguous contacts with state power, the Ogoni community ultimately proved unwilling to relinquish its most elemental freedoms.

Now if, as we have seen, Saro-Wiwa and other MOSOP leaders were effective in mobilising the Ogoni in their arduous struggle against the discourses of oppression; they were even more effective in shaping national and international

opinion on the plight of the Ogoni. The local and international facets of the campaign fed and reinforced each other, with the former often shaping the dimension of the latter. Within Nigeria, the Ogoni case so eloquently canvassed by Ken Saro-Wiwa in the most conspicuous public arenas, helped to re-ignite the interest of pro-democracy and human rights activists on the problems of minority citizenship in a multi-ethnic state. In the context of decades of successive military regimes in Nigeria, the Ogoni rebellion emerged in the 1990s as a veritable site in which all shades of activists could converge to formulate and canvass a new grammar of citizenship in a democratic and egalitarian state.

In placing the Ogoni case in the Nigerian public domain, Ken Saro-Wiwa had to rely on his access to the popular media where he had a reputation as a trenchant political columnist with *The Punch*, *The Vanguard* and the *Sunday Times* newspapers. He was also a successful screen and television producer. Indeed the success of his television situation comedy, *Basi and Co.*, which ran on national television for a record of five years from 1985 to 1990 and had an estimated viewing audience of 30 million, made Saro-Wiwa a household name and established his reputation in the arena of cultural production. To present the Ogoni plight, Saro-Wiwa had to seize the opportunity afforded by his access to the print media to address and reach a wider audience, while drawing from his screen production experience to achieve graphic force and visibility for the Ogoni in print. As he was to later recall in his detention memoir:

The newspaper column widened my reading audience and spread my ideas to a considerable extent. Week after week, I made sure that the name Ogoni appeared before the eyes of the readers. It was a television technique designed to leave the name indelibly in their minds. Sometimes I would deliberately provoke readers or fly a kite in the acerbic and political column. And I invariably got the sort of reaction I expected (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 65).

But here again, Saro-Wiwa's conscious use of a television technique even in his print media campaigns for the rights of his community reinforces the notion that the Ogoni struggle was carefully imagined as one to be conducted using the technique of spectacle.

Even as it took on the world stage in the early 1990s following the persecution of its leaders by the Nigerian state, the Ogoni struggle continued to be expressed through the technique of spectacle. Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP became actively involved in the activities of such transnational advocacy platforms as the Ethnic Minority Rights Organization of Africa (EMIROAF), and the Unrepresented Peoples Organization (UNPO). While EMIROAF promotes the human and ecological rights of indigenous groups in Africa, the Geneva-based UNPO champions the cause of marginalised and endangered communities across the world. As bodies such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace,

Bodyshop, PEN International, etc., joined the Ogoni campaign, the story of the struggle of a Nigerian minority community demanding environmental justice became a regular feature in such Western news media as the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Time Magazine*, Cable Network News (CNN), the British Channel 4 and many others.

When Ken Saro-Wiwa and his other eight compatriots were hanged after a sham trial by the Nigerian military junta, on 10 November 1995, one of the images projected by the media around the world was the haunting spectacle of Saro-Wiwa addressing a grim-faced crowd of the Ogoni at a public square. This was a fitting tribute to a man and a community who, in their momentous tussles with the discourses of oppression, used only the most effective tools in the storehouse of the theatre in their arguments for the freedom and dignity of man.

CONCLUSION

In a 1993 interview with *The News* magazine in Nigeria, two years before his death, Ken Saro-Wiwa expressed what he believed to be the transnational importance of the Ogoni struggle within a globalised vision of oppression. He said:

I am recreating the Ogoni people, first and foremost, to come to the realization of what they have always been which British colonization tried to take away from them. So my effort is very intellectual. It is backed by theories and ideas which will, in fact, matter to the rest of Africa in the course of time.⁴

It is necessary, in concluding, to examine the place and significance of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni within the corpus of dissident culturalist discourse in Africa and beyond.

Firstly, the ability of Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP to link and transfigure localised struggles for environmental justice into a transnational narrative of social change is increasingly acknowledged by critics as an important shift in the arena of cultural and identity politics. For example, Biodun Jeyifo (1998: XXIV) contends that the broad and unambiguous global support for the Ogoni cause proves that 'the basic unit for conceiving the most oppressed, the most down-trodden as a social aggregate is no longer the nation-state; rather, it is what we might call the true communities of suffering and resistance.' For Jeyifo, the Ogoni narrative marks a 'political-ideological seismic shift in the struggles of the late 20th century for political, cultural, economic and ecological survival of most of the people of our common earth'.

Similarly, in a study on the cultural and environmental politics of Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP, Susan Comfort (2002: 229–246) suggests that because the

Ogoni struggle was defined in terms of 'indigenous' identity in a way that connects it to other oppressed ethnic identities elsewhere, it feeds into the 'political goals that include resistance to global mal-development'. Comfort makes the point that 'Indeed, the Ogoni are now regularly featured as anti-globalization icons by the left media in the West'. This view converges with Jeyifo's argument that until the appearance of Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP on the scene of identity politics in Nigeria, ethnically framed liberation movements had hardly inspired widespread endorsement, known as they were for their secessionist and exclusivist rhetoric. As Jeyifo puts it:

It is thus the supreme achievement of Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP that they have shaken off this ideological odium and have given unquestionable moral and ideological force to their insistence on the specific plight of the Ogoni while at the same time recognizing that the Ogoni are not alone, that other communities and individuals also suffer from the same chain of linked local, national, and global exploitative and repressive forces (xxv).

But the intervention of Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP in dissident discourse is important in yet another sense. While some other dissident movements seemed mainly to adopt a top-down elitist approach, the Ogoni movement was a holistic communal narrative consolidated by horizontal alliances rooted in the common Ogoni folk community itself. As the Movement's decisions and activities must be ratified at every point by the Ogoni peasantry who supplied its vital energy, class stratifications within the movement seemed blurred and Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP leaders appeared to be no more than moral carriers of a communal mandate.

In other words, Ken Saro-Wiwa's cultural argument for ecological and social justice was valid only because it was intricately linked to the Ogoni folk imagery of communal ecological rights. Saro-Wiwa himself admits this in *A Month and a Day* when he conveys his impression of the people's reaction to his speech at a public rally:

From the reaction of the sea of faces down below, you would have thought that I had been lecturing them for years. Indeed, on reflection, I now realize what happened. I was not telling these people anything they had not known. I had only given voice to the facts they had harboured in their hearts for years but which they dared not express for fear of the expected reprisals which they knew the Nigerian state would not hesitate to visit on them (*A Month and a Day*: 103).

It was appropriate therefore that until his death, Ken Saro-Wiwa always thought of himself only in symbolic messengerial terms as the 'spokesman' of the Ogoni people – a kind of moral steward called to communal duty.

The particular contribution of Ken Saro-Wiwa's activism lay not merely in his ability to straddle the false chasm between theoretical dissidence and practical resistance. By mobilising a community through carnivals, demonstrations and other popular forms of protests such as we have seen, Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP were able to elevate the question of environmental sanctity to the status of a communal cultural manifesto. And because they chose the medium of spectacle to publicise and protest their plight, always linking this with the plights of others elsewhere, the Ogoni were able to galvanise the moral comradeship of other groups and communities around the world.

The challenge is for other communities of the world to continue the struggle – the unfinished effort to reconstruct the connection between the state of the natural ecology and the health of our common cultural life.

The state and the 'southern problem' in Sudan

Marginalisation, self-determination and secessionism

Aleksi Ylönen

INTRODUCTION

In Africa, political conflicts including armed responses have emerged in a number of narrowly based political systems. This is explained to a large degree by the failure to accommodate certain sections of elites and their constituencies which have a potential claim to a greater share of political power and national resources. In Sudan, this dynamic has been particularly controversial due to the longevity of the exclusive Arabised Muslim elite rule and the persistence of its particular nationbuilding agenda dictating state policies.

The early response to this political reality in Southern Sudan was the call for a degree of self-determination through a federal solution. As a result, a group of southern leaders stood out as the first political opposition originating in the peripheries of the Sudanese state formed in the nineteenth century, seeking to dismantle the governing elite's assimilationist state and nationbuilding agenda aimed at cultural transformation in the state's frontiers. However when the state brushed the southern concerns aside, more militant armed and non-armed opposition emerged with sections of the southern leadership seeking self-determination through various political approaches. The crystallisation of such resistance set the stage for the state's securitisation of the southern issue, coining it as the 'southern problem'. This way, Southern Sudan was portrayed as a threat to the state's imagined unity based on Arab culture and Islam, extensions of the Arabised Muslim elite's self-proclaimed identity were used as the main pillars of state-building.

The grievances that had led many southerners to challenge the state were not fully addressed by the 1972 Addis Ababa Peace Treaty that ended the first rebellion in Southern Sudan. Rather, the limited autonomy established after the war was repeatedly violated by the state, which resumed its active pursuit of Arabisation and Islamisation of Southern Sudan in the early 1980s and later adopted a pan-Islamist policy. In response, the southern armed opposition again gained protagonism and its 'Africanist' agenda to contrast 'Arabism' was to a large extent co-opted under a socialist-federalist 'New Sudan' ideological

approach that culminated in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), ensuring Southern Sudan a degree of self-determination. A self-determination referendum stipulated by the CPA led to independence and the establishment of the Republic of South Sudan as Africa's 54th state in July 2011.

This chapter examines a case of expression of self-determination in Africa, highlighting the historical roots and development of southern political regionalism in Sudan. It adopts a position that collective agendas and interests of elites are fundamental in shaping political projects, such as state and nation building, or, in contrast, to inspire resistance to such schemes. Thus, the chapter highlights Sudan's exclusive Arabised Muslim governing elite's assimilationist state-formation and nationbuilding strategy, derived from its self-proclaimed identity intended to be established as the 'national' identity by extending regionally the boundaries of Arab culture and Islam, as well as the southern elite's regionally defined response to this state imposed Arabisation and Islamisation, ranging from federalism to secessionism.

ON STATE AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN AFRICA

The call for self-determination is not a new phenomenon in Africa. Political demands and expressions of self-determination have ranged in various degrees in almost any given political system. Such demands have included different levels of federal or autonomous political status within a state, but also secession and the founding of a new state as their extreme form.

The examination of self-determination and its expressions (i.e. federation, autonomy and secession) requires the recognition of organisation of a society around a state, a politically sovereign entity that is a recognised member of the modern international state system. Understood in this sense, the state is not an isolated entity but a form of political organisation subject to negotiation and continuously exposed to external agents and conditions. With respect to domestic dynamics, a state is not a static entity as it goes through a continuous process of (re)forming and (re)negotiation of its legitimacy at the local level. It is led by governing elites, who in the case of Africa often come from members of privileged groups of the society. Their representatives, in the process of decolonisation, were able to capture the economic and political power exercised exclusively by the preceding colonial authorities (Herbst 2000; Deng 2002; Ylönen 2009).

This type of state has often been imposed as an extension of the constructed identity of the governing elite through the claim to a particular history (i.e. myths of foundation, narratives of heroes and conquests) and culture (i.e. customs, language, religion, symbols and signs). These allow the imposition of a form of 'national' identity that differs in many aspects from the identity

of diverse local social groups inhabiting the state territory. Due to the lack of recognition and legitimacy among large populations of its subjects, such state can be considered more culturally alien to the populations in its territory than other states in different regions of the world (Ekeh 1975; Englebert 2000), as in the case of Europe where states have had more time to impose themselves over the subjected populations through socialisation and acculturation.

However, the conditions in the perceivably 'narrowly ruled' states in Africa often allow the governing elites to represent themselves as the most appropriate group to claim state leadership and exclude representatives of other social groupings from political (and economic) power. These dynamics of state marginalisation (Ylönen 2009) favour populations from regions that form constituencies of the governing elites to ensure sufficient local support, but seek to either assimilate or exclude those populations often found in the state peripheries that resist the imposed order, cultural transformation and/or the fomented national identity. In order to understand demands for self-determination, it is useful to examine them in the context of state of marginalisation that is particularly prevalent among those states with colonial past in Africa, which have continued to be highly exclusive and suffer from challenges related to the lack of legitimacy among sectors of the population.

The concept of self-determination emerged from the World War II experience. Inspired by the Atlantic Charter, it coincided with the pressure leading to de-colonisation. This background explains the evolution of the legal interpretation of self-determination in the international law as a 'collective right that attaches to the whole people of a state, ensuring that they may freely choose their own leaders and form of government' (Deng 2008: 46).

However the above widely recognised definition, endorsed by the United Nations (UN) resolutions, which relatively successfully accommodates most nation-states, leaves room for interpretation regarding internal self-determination in states that include a number of distinct ethnic and cultural groups forming nations in their territories. The initial international declarations for the right to self-determination focused on freedom from external, colonial or other, domination by defined and internationally territorial units, and have later inspired contradicting UN resolutions along with reinterpretation and debate of self-determination as a concept in the postcolonial world order.

If the state is reduced to a narrow and highly exclusive representation of a minority group and enforced through domination facilitated by an uneven concentration of political and economic power, as in the case of a number of countries in Africa, the internationally accepted definition of self-determination offers little relief for those nations or groups which feel that they are subjected to unfair domination by the agents of the state. When this is the case, the state's legitimacy is potentially more intensely contested, and its power likely to be under more pressure to be re-negotiated, especially among sections

of leadership of populations which feel suppressed and less represented by it. Among such groups which consider themselves marginalised, often inhabiting state peripheries and borderlands, this may lead to the (re)questioning of state's supremacy, reducing it to one actor among a number of others that seek to establish its authority on a particular population and a territory.

Such circumstances may create opportune conditions for the demands of regional self-determination. A call for federalism, autonomy, or more equal wealth- and power-sharing could be considered as relatively moderate expressions of the call for regional self-determination within the framework of a state. However, any of these approaches can be seen to weaken the centralised state in terms of concentration of power and resources to particular governing elite. Thus such initiatives tend to be unpopular among state leaderships. In addition, federalism may have disintegrating qualities, particularly when it is strongly linked to the call for self-determination of particular groups or nations and their regions. In such cases, the central government tends to oppose a federal arrangement vigorously and often only submits to redistribution of political power when otherwise faced by a real threat of territorial disintegration of the state.

Secessionism, on the other hand, can be perceived as a more radical form of calling for self-determination. It may rise especially in the 'narrowly ruled' states described above, which consist of a number of ethnic groups claiming nationhood and/or self-determination. However, secessionism is largely condemned by the international system of states, although it has become subject to case specific interpretation in situations of 'internal colonialism' (resembling colonial order but in which those who wield political power originate from other region within the state) and prolonged large scale human rights violations (Bodley 1988; Deng 2008). Such circumstances have taken place, for instance, in Eritrea and Southern Sudan whose secession has been endorsed by a number of other states within the international community. In such situations the viability of the secessionist territory as a state in terms of capabilities and resources has often been considered as one criterion for recognition.

Moreover, effective claims for self-determination require common vision from the leading cadres of the marginalised local elites and this vision to be transferred credibly to their constituencies for political mobilisation. They also require a profound lack of state legitimacy and weak state authority in the area of dissent. In addition, not only is the agency of the leading and respected sectors of the local elites essential, but the establishment of a viable regionalist or secessionist movement presupposes a support-base which may be generated by the circumstances of fear and mistrust towards those agents active locally and perceived to represent, or be related to, the state through their interests, behaviour and/or social status. Furthermore, if the movement decides to pursue its aim violently by facing the state in an armed struggle, it needs at least minimal

resources and manpower to maintain organisational cohesion; and to have any reasonable chance of success it should gain a degree of external legitimacy and support.

From the state's perspective, regional self-determination, and particularly secessionism, is a challenge. It may be perceived as a threat to the very existence of the state, or at least to the extension of the power of its ruling elite. This is why the state tends to portray the call for self-determination as a menace, often demonising individuals belonging to social groups that support claims for self-determination, portraying them as the treacherous 'Other'. Such a strategy seeks to justify the violence used by the state's security apparatus to quell dissent and enforce authority, with an aim to consolidate its monopoly of violence. Domestically, violent suppression of the movements claiming self-determination is the norm, and has largely been sanctioned by other members of the international community which uphold the idea of state sovereignty. This way, the approach to self-determination at the inter-state level differs radically from the strategies employed by the states when faced with movements calling for self-determination.

In sum, the demand for self-determination and its different manifestations in Africa tends to emerge as one plausible response to perceived state domination and marginalisation. It often has a polarising effect which may trigger political violence and crystallise in forced assimilation and social homogenisation orchestrated by the state to neutralise the threat posed by the demands for self-determination. The analysis that follows concentrates on Southern Sudan as a case study which highlights dynamics related to the emergence of southern regionalism within Sudan and its main manifestations.

ORIGINS OF STATE DOMINATION IN SUDAN AND SOUTHERN POLITICAL RESISTANCE

The 'northern problem', defined as a political system characterised by rule of a narrow minority elite claiming power through particular common identity discourse and symbols, has been central to the political dynamics of a number of African states since colonialism. As established above, the efforts of consolidation of the minority elite dominated state, along lines of political marginalisation and exclusion are intimately linked to the rise of non-armed and armed resistance, the latter of which is expressed as extreme manifestation of political opposition. However, grievances that have shaped the political objectives of resistance, and the strategies the local actors opposing the state adopt, depend on the context. In most circumstances, the armed responses have emerged in narrowly based political systems that do not accommodate sections of marginalised local or regional elites and their constituencies that demand greater share of political power and

national resources. In Sudan, this dynamic has been particularly controversial due to the longevity of the exclusive Arabised Muslim elite rule emerging from the colonial period. Partly constructed upon this governing elite's rejection of southern Sudanese political demands, the narrow and protracted state and nationbuilding agenda based on extension of Arab culture and Islam has shaped the state's policies and performance in its peripheries.

Historically, the area encompassing contemporary Sudan was host to a number of great kingdoms and sultanates. Its territorial diversity is matched by its highly heterogeneous and ethnically and culturally diverse population. Contemporary Northern Sudan was Arabised and Islamised throughout centuries, which its governing elites consider binding forces for its estimated almost 31 million people organised mainly along ethnic lines. The leading socio-political actors in Northern Sudan have historically emerged mostly among the groups of the Nile Valley north of Khartoum, particularly the Jaaliyyin and Shaiqiyya. In similarly diverse Southern Sudan, estimated to host a population of over 8 million, a great number of ethnic groups exist. The largest of these are the Dinka, followed by the Nuer, Bari and Zande, all divided into numerous sub-sections and clans. Throughout the centuries many southern Sudanese have become Christianised, while large Animist and minority Muslim populations exist as well.

In the course of the nineteenth century, Southern Sudan was integrated loosely into the Sudanese polity. It became a frontier land for extraction of resources for the Egyptian crown and its associates, including its north-central Sudanese subjects, but only marginally connected to the colonial polity. This condition remained during the Anglo-Egyptian and postcolonial periods. The Turco-Egyptian domination was followed by the Mahdist Islamic nationalist wars, prolonging violent extraction in Southern Sudan until the Anglo-Egyptian conquest established most of the territory of contemporary Sudan as a *de facto* British colony in 1899 and later separated it administratively from Northern Sudan. This incomplete incorporation of Southern Sudan in the Sudanese polity (its continued position as the state's peripheral frontier) laid the base for local dissidence and the 'southern problem', which emerged from the opposition to the Arabised Muslim governing elite controlled state's domination.

By the early 1900s, the British had installed themselves in exclusive control over the colonial state in Sudan. In the process of territorializing the colony to establish control, they isolated Southern Sudan from northern Arab, Muslim, and nationalist influences and promoted a different social order based on missionary education, Christianity, and (re)invented 'traditional' cultures and values as a counterforce to Arab culture and Islam. This period, beginning gradually in the 1920s and ending in 1946, was essential in creating and shaping the worldview of the embryonic southern elite that emerged in the 1950s and claimed regional leadership. These selected few, many sons of local chiefs

or other individuals in which the British saw potential, were mainly educated in missionary schools where they gained familiarity with each other beyond ethnic boundaries and were equipped with a view of history of slavery that fed attitudes against the northern 'Arab' Muslims.

However after a long period of separate rule, and treatment of Southern Sudan as a separate territorial entity from Northern Sudan, the British decided that the 'region' was unviable in surviving on its own as an independent state. Also it was considered undesirable for Southern Sudan to be joined with any of the already poor East African territories in spite of perceived cultural affinity. Thus, after beginning to face external and internal pressure to decolonise Sudan, in 1946 the British took a decision to re-subject the southern territory to the administration in Northern Sudan due to decidedly shared historical and economic links between the two regions (Collins 2008: 55–7), despite the latter's perceived closer cultural and ethnic affiliation with Eastern Africa.

During the process of decolonisation, political regionalism surfaced among sections of the southern elite. Although sentiments towards Northern Sudan, based on the history of violent extraction had been present for a long time, it was not until the British decided to seek the opinion of prominent southerners about the future position of Southern Sudan within the Sudanese polity, that several low-level civil servants and chiefs expressed in writing their rejection of the perceived resumption of northern domination. A number of them demonstrated fear and mistrust of Northern Sudan, emphasised the lower political sophistication of southerners and expressed the need for the establishment of a local regional government in Southern Sudan to ensure a degree of regional self-determination, either as part of Sudan or as a separate political entity (Wawa 2006: 23–44).

In June 1947 British officials held a conference in Juba to which they invited a selected handful of prominent southerners to come together for the first time. The objective was to debate with colonial administrators and northern representatives the terms of southern integration to the political institutions. Early on during the conference proceedings, the British emphasised that the decision had already been made to include southern territory in the independent Sudan (without the consent of southerners), and asserted that the conference only had a consultative status. In spite of the existence of a clear record of minutes of the conference, it remains unclear why the most vocal of the initially reluctant southerners had a change of heart and, in spite of early reluctance, decided during the second day of the proceedings to agree to participate in the political institutions in Khartoum without delay. While some British thought that this was due to northern manipulation of southerners during the first night of the conference (Daly 1991: 240), many southern Sudanese feel that their less experienced representatives had been threatened and/or cheated to change their position. Subsequently, the conference was used as a tool to justify

the unity of Sudan with sending a 13-member southern observation mission to the Legislative Assembly (national parliament) to be established, dominated by the political forces of the Arabised Muslim elite from north-central Sudan. In the initial Legislative Assembly, consisting of 75 seats, 10 were nominated by the British, 52 were allocated directly to northerners (10 elected and 42 appointed) and 13 to southerners (Collins 2008: 58). Thus, what was first agreed to be a learning mission was converted into official southern representation at the national level according to the believed population ratio, while it was clear that this inexperienced and diverse group could not safeguard the region's interests against the majority of northerners familiar with state politics. As a result, the British Governor General's personal powers remained crucial as the main safeguard against the Legislative Assembly's political decisions that could have a negative impact on Southern Sudan.

In 1952 a Free Officer's coup in Egypt pressured the finalisation of decolonisation in Sudan. After the withdrawal of Egypt from its co-dominium position, an agreement was reached between the Egyptians, British, and northern Sudanese political parties in February 1953 about the independence of Sudan by 1956. Southern participation was excluded from these negotiations with a pretext that no officially registered southern party existed in Sudan.

Yet, some prominent Southern Sudanese had been politically active since the mid-1940s. In 1951, southern political cadres had begun pushing for a political grouping at the national level. Disgruntled at having been repeatedly voted down in the Legislative Assembly by the dominant political forces of the Arabised elite, a southern representative Buth Diu (a Nuer), together with Stanislaus Paysama (a Dinka) and Abdul Rahman Sule (a southern Muslim), decided to establish a political party in 1952 to represent the region (Badal 1994: 105; Ruay 1994: 66–7). This was the beginning of formal southern political regionalism and the first major attempt to overcome ethnic and religious boundaries in political organisation, within and beyond the southern political elite (Howell 1973: 165; O'Ballance 1977: 36).

The Southern Party was registered before the first parliamentary elections in 1953. It ran for southern agendas and independence of Sudan, opposing the union with Egypt which many of its members viewed partly responsible for the southern marginalisation and exclusion from the three-party negotiations on Sudan's self-determination. Still the party remained weak as it faced manipulation by the northern parties eager to neutralise the threat posed by southern representation to their dominant position, the latter often engaging, for instance, in bribery and co-optation to prevent the formation of a collective southern stand.

In 1954 the Southern Party sought to expand its constituency to counter the dominant northern National Unionist Party (NUP). It changed its name to Liberal Party and convinced many southern independents and former NUP

supporters to join, but was unsuccessful in attracting support in the northern provinces, which led the Liberal Party to change its name first to Southern Liberal Party and then back to Southern Party (Howell 1973: 166; O'Ballance 1977: 36-7).⁵ The inability of southern parties to gain support in Northern Sudan can be attributed largely to the prevailing attitudes relating to social hierarchies emanating from the perceived supremacy Arab culture and Islam, and the legacy of slavery.

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE ARMED OPPOSITION

Sudan gained independence on 1 January 1956. This took place in circumstances in which Southern Sudan was experiencing increasing instability in the aftermath of disturbances and a mutiny among some southern units of the army in August 1955 in Torit. These events had triggered in the context of British withdrawal from Sudan and the extending fear of resumed northern domination in Southern Sudan.

The transfer of power from the British to the northern Sudanese nationalist elite in the early 1950s required 'Sudanisation' of public employment. However, many southern leaders viewed the process generally as Arabisation, or 'internal colonisation' by a largely alien state controlled by northern 'Arabs'. Some prominent southerners fed the fears of 'Arab' domination, promoting a sentiment that another era of slavery by 'the Arabs' was at hand. Fears of northern repression were further promoted by the disappointed majority in southern political cadres, which made such sentiments widespread among constituencies in various parts of Southern Sudan. The shattered hopes of influential political representation, jobs and economic opportunity and development, channelling from the local elites to their constituencies, deepened the sentiment of despair together with the influx of 'Arab' administrators and merchants (*jallaba*) arriving to govern and conduct business in the southern provinces. The anxiety was so widespread that the situation became a threat to state's security (Ruay 1994: 72), as local animosity centred on an attitude to face the 'former (slave) masters' to correct a perceived social injustice, particularly in the southernmost Equatoria Province where part of the leading cadres had grown up under influence of the previously mentioned missionary education and formed the most educated section of population in Southern Sudan.

A significant response to the 'Sudanisation' among the southern political cadres was the call for federalism, which raised tension between the government and sectors of the local leadership. In this situation some southern politicians asked their constituents to get ready for sacrifices (Said 1965: 173). While there were those who decided to continue to collaborate with the central government, or voice their concerns within the political system, the majority in the

southern political class perceived itself as politically, economically and socially marginalised. Many sought to pass their frustrations to their constituencies by promoting and reinforcing these sentiments for political mobilisation for opposition and to pressure for economic reforms that would improve their personal position as well as political concessions for Southern Sudan as a region.

In this situation, instead of attempting to accommodate the southern elite, the northern Arabised Muslim governing elite continued to deem itself culturally superior and entitled alone to state political and economic power. It sidelined the leading southerners through the exclusive view of social hierarchy dominated by Arab language, culture and Islam (Deng 1995; Jok 2001, 2007), and agreed upon a remarkably consistent common strategy to generate and feed divisions among southern politicians through incorporating them deliberately unequally in the state apparatus, favouring some over others.

In the context of growing demands among sections of the southern elite, the government securitised the southern issue. After the NUP victory in the 1953 election, its leader Ismail al-Azhari had become Prime Minister but received a cold welcome in Southern Sudan (RCIDSS, 1956: 21). Soon after, the government announced that it was aware of conspiracies being weaved locally against the state and would according to Ruay use 'force of iron' against any southerner who would 'dare attempt to divide the nation' (quoted in Ruay 1994: 73). It ordered the administrators in Southern Sudan, who were now almost all northerners, to introduce stricter measures to control the local people, transmitting such instructions through the public Radio Omdurman which also many southerners listened (Ruay 1994: 74). At this point, sectors of the Arabised elite perceived views expressed within the southern political cadres as a challenge to the aspiration to extend their hegemony in the southern provinces, converting the matter into a 'southern problem'.

The 'Sudanisation' policy had also resulted in northerners occupying higher positions in the army. This had important implications in the southern Sudanese units of the Sudan Equatoria Corps (SEC) since the security apparatus had now become officered by the northerners instead of the British. Among the troops in Equatoria, relative to elsewhere in Southern Sudan, there were more southern junior officers with close relationships with southern soldiers which facilitated later dissent.

The process of decolonisation and recent government reaction elevated a sentiment of division by provoking a feeling of resistance and separatism within sectors of the southern political cadres. In this environment many southerners began to feel that they were about to be subjected to northern rule as second-class citizens or again as slaves. Threats of use of force fed sentiments for dissent. This situation catalysed the coming together of many southern leaders and promoted their call for federalism which became a persisting item in the southern regionalist political agenda (Markakis 1998: 111–2).

In this situation the government became increasingly preoccupied by the developments in Southern Sudan. As a result, al-Azhari sought to prevent a conference convoked by the leaders of southern political forces in Juba, but this compromised the government's legitimacy further, especially in Equatoria Province. When the government arrested a local member of the Legislative Assembly in Yambio and the local work force at the government's agro-industrial Zande Scheme in Nzara was downsized, riots erupted. In response, the government attempted to regain authority by force, but this resulted in many deaths. The Yambio and Nzara incidents significantly strengthened the anti-government sentiment further, resonating elsewhere in the southern provinces. They gave sectors of southern politicians particularly in Equatoria a growing leverage for mobilisation for dissidence and violent action against the perceivably increasingly illegitimate state seeking to subdue local opposition to what was viewed as 'internal colonialism'.

After the Nzara disturbances, the government became concerned that the anxiety and tension in the region would result in a major breakdown of order. This elevated pressure to send northern army troops to the region, as it had become clear that the current security forces had almost no control over southern territory, nor could the government count on the locally drafted military and police who were increasingly consumed by the local sentiments. Indeed, the Nzara incident had affected the SEC and on 7 August a plot was revealed with a plan to kill northern officers in southern provinces (RCIDSS, 1956: 25–7). An investigation revealed a network of connections linking individuals associated with the Liberal Party and the SEC to the conspiracy.

Consequently, law enforcement was asked to arrest the civilians involved in the plot, but this provoked even further riots. The threatening situation drove the administrators to call for troops to be sent to maintain order in Southern Sudan. On 10 August 1955, Khartoum airlifted a detachment of 500 soldiers to Juba with the intention of maintaining order and neutralising the threat posed by the SEC by transferring troops belonging to it based in Torit to Khartoum. Meanwhile the anxiety and fear were so high that upon the arrival of soldiers, many locals fled from Juba after having become convinced that the troops had been sent to kill them (RCISSD, 1956: 31).

Some southern leaders in Equatoria fomented the fears further. They circulated a false controversial telegram and encouraged rumours that the southern troops to be transferred would be eliminated. The evacuation of families by northern officers from Torit on 14 August was taken as yet another sign that the northerners were preparing to exterminate the SEC (RCISSD, 1956: 105). It is in these circumstances that the southern troops became consumed by fear and anxiety, and increasingly inclined to provoke a violent confrontation against their northern officials, many of whom they now detested.

Despite knowing about the possibility of a mutiny, the order for transfer to Khartoum was imposed. This disregard the mounting political tension in circumstances in which the northern officers of the SEC and administration had lost their legitimacy, being increasingly viewed as enemies among many southerners.

The order provoked a mutiny among the SEC in Torit. The outrage first consumed the town and then spread to other parts of Equatoria, before extending to Bahr al-Ghazal and Upper Nile. In other garrison towns of Equatoria such as Juba, Yei, Yambio and Maridi a total of 190 southern soldiers revolted (O'Ballance 1977: 41). In Equatoria, the disturbances affected practically all the province as northerners were systematically rounded up, imprisoned, and then executed, their property looted, variably sparing women and children (RCISSD, 1956: 47–66). In spite of some southerners attempting to save northern lives, many of them were either tricked or forced to give way. (Eprile 1974: 43). The outrage resulted in 261 victims who were northerners, while 75 southerners perished in the violent commotion as well (Collins 2008: 67). It provoked a sentiment of revenge and the government took measures to prosecute the perpetrators and carried out hundreds of death sentences. Some mutineers had fled with their arms and staged a low intensity rebellion in Southern Sudan. In other words, what was a planned scheme of successive mutinies provoked by consciously promoted propaganda had been joined by thousands of southerners, including hundreds of soldiers, police officers and prison wardens, transforming it into a general uprising against perceived northern 'Arab' domination (Ruay 1994: 81). In the course of the following years, the government took violent and repressive counter-insurgency measures, culminating during the military regime of Ibrahim Abboud (1958 to 1964), characterised at the early stages by the sentiment of revenge and later the attempt for forcible cultural assimilation of Southern Sudan through the imposition of Arabic culture (i.e. language and customs) and Islam. Meanwhile the rebel opposition strengthened due to external support, and the violence escalated into an all-out insurgency by the late-1960s.

FROM ADDIS ABABA TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PEACE AGREEMENT

In spite of various initiatives, such as the March 1965 Round Table Conference, divisions primarily among the various factions of the southern armed and non-armed opposition prevented reaching a viable peace process. It was only when Colonel Jaafar Nimeiri assumed power after an army coup in 1969, inspired in part by the growing discontent of the war, that peaceful solution of the conflict gained momentum. This led to a peace treaty between the government of Sudan and the main southern rebel movement, the Southern Sudan

Liberation Movement (also known as the Anya Nya), in February 1972 in Addis Ababa.

However, the agreement left the grievances that had led many southerners to challenge the imposed state order partly unaddressed. Although the southern opposition had been to a considerable part secessionist during the insurgency, the Addis Ababa Agreement conceded Southern Sudan limited autonomy. It received second vice-presidency at the national level and enjoyed a limited degree of regional self-determination through a regional government and parliament. Yet, southern elite was not fully incorporated at the national level and then sidelined through the Nimeiri regime's decision to reconcile with the northern elite factions it had excluded from power. In this context of changing alliances, Southern Sudan's regional integrity was repeatedly violated in the course of the 1970s and early 1980s because Nimeiri's regime resumed the northern elite's active pursuit of Arabisation and Islamisation of Southern Sudan by adopting a pan-Islamist policy that was further deepened after a brief democratic interlude ended by a National Islamic Front (NIF) coup in 1989, and the establishment of an Islamist regime.

In response to the central government's infringement on southern autonomy and Nimeiri's announcement of its abolition in June 1983, the residual, secessionist, southern armed opposition that had not accepted the Addis Ababa Agreement, solidified. By the mid-1980s these opposition forces were to an extent co-opted under the socialist-federalist ideological approach of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), which emerged from a conspiracy of a series of co-ordinated mutinies organised by a handful of former southern rebel officers in the Sudanese army (Madut-Arop 2006). The SPLM/A's objective, stated in its July 1983 manifesto, was conditioned by its main supporter, the Derg regime in Ethiopia, and included a number of political objectives many of which endured the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War. These included the overthrow of the Nimeiri regime, the establishment of a 'New Sudan' based on a socialist federal democratic model and the founding of a more equitable society with religious freedom and more equal redistribution of power and wealth, all aimed at remedying the perceived social and regional marginalisation of Southern Sudan in the Sudanese political and economic state system.

In September 1983 Nimeiri had decreed Islamic *shari'a* laws to govern state legislation, which were rejected by many in the southern leadership. Again, the fear of direct 'Arab' domination consumed many southerners and strengthened dissent in terms of an influx of recruits to the rebel factions that maintained refuge in Gambella region in Ethiopia.

In April 1985, the Nimeiri regime was overthrown and replaced by an attempt to form a democratic coalition government of northern political parties. However, this was short-lived as Islamist forces that had infiltrated in the state

and its security apparatus during the Nimeiri rule paved way for the NIF regime. The NIF government, through its close relationship with the army, sought to forcibly and violently assimilate non-Muslim communities according to its 'national salvation' ideology, based on an exclusive interpretation of 'Arab' ethnicity as its leading force and aimed at a wholesale Islamic transformation of the society. This approach was not essentially changed by its adoption of a new name, the National Congress party (NCP) in 1998. Throughout this time, the war in Southern Sudan continued in spite of a number of peace initiatives, none of which were seriously and coherently pursued with unanimity, either by the sections of the Arabised governing elite or the various rebel factions in Southern Sudan.

In the early 1990s the SPLM/A, due to a large extent to leadership rivalries, the leaders of the SPLA-Nasir faction, Riek Machar and Lam Akol, declared to have taken over the movement, which they portrayed as pan-African and redefined secession of Southern Sudan as its main objective. The faction negotiated the 1992 Frankfurt Agreement with the NCP, the latter vaguely recognising an added degree of constitutional self-determination to Southern Sudan through a referendum. Yet, it failed to gain enough negotiation leverage to press Khartoum to accept a future southern secession, and the agreement was widely considered as a hoax because it failed to include John Garang's SPLM/A-Mainstream.

At the same time, the SPLA-Nasir became enmeshed in an escalating war between different sections of the Nuer among which it drew its constituency. In an attempt to regroup, the organisation changed its name twice, first to SPLA-United and then to South Sudan Independence Movement/Army (SSIM/A) under Machar. In 1994, the SSIM/A, which was supported by the Sudanese government against the SPLM/A-Mainstream, signed a Peace Charter with Khartoum in which Sudanese unity was reaffirmed with *shari'a* as the source of legislation, while southerners were allowed a referendum about their political aspirations (Johnson 2003: 121–2).

These treaties were followed by the 1997 Khartoum Peace Agreement (KPA) which was again engineered by the NCP according to its own objectives. The KPA, an attempt by the regime to show that the main southern factions agreed to peace, committed the state into a federal system, and guaranteed 'the right of the people of Southern Sudan to determine their political aspirations and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development [...] [through] [...] this right in a referendum...' (KPA, 1997). The eligible voters for the referendum were southern Sudanese aged eighteen and above who resided inside and outside South Sudan, and could choose between continued 'Unity' of Sudan and 'Secession' of Southern Sudan. The vote was to take place through a secret ballot, be free and fair and be supervised by a Special Referendum Commission together with observers from the OAU, Arab League, UN, religious bodies,

Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), national and foreign NGOs, other countries and national and international media (KPA, 1997). The SPLM/A-Mainstream dismissed the agreement and it was never implemented, but it is clear that it greatly influenced the 2002 Machakos Protocol that became the essence and Chapter I of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with some practically identical provisions.

In 1997, a peace process that accommodated both main warring parties, the sub-regional initiative under IGAD, experienced its first breakthrough. However, in spite of an early commitment through the signing of the Declaration of Principles, the process was stalled mainly by the NIF's reluctance to negotiate largely because the external pressure it had been exposed to from the neighbouring Eritrea and Ethiopia abruptly ended due to a war between the two in 1998. However, in the context of the US' War on Terror, after the 11 September attacks, the pressure on Khartoum increased again. The weakening situation of the NCP due to international isolation was an important factor in persuading it to engage in continuous negotiations with the SPLM/A that was heavily endorsed by the US. This led to the signing of a number of protocols in the course of 2001 and 2004, and in January 2005 culminated in the final accord, the CPA, an exclusive peace treaty between the NCP controlled Islamist Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A (CPA, 2005).

The CPA appeared to some as a solution to the 'southern problem'. This was because it granted Southern Sudan limited autonomy similarly to the Addis Ababa period, but also due to the protagonists pledging to improve conditions in the region and 'make unity attractive' for the southerners during a 6-year CPA peace implementation period from 2005 to 2010. At the end of this so-called 'interim period', the southerners would judge the progress made and exercise their right to self-determination in a popular referendum by choosing between continuing as part of a united Sudan or form an independent state. However, marginalisation of southerners and their region continued, embedded in the logic of exclusive governance by the Arabised Muslim governing elite, and southern demands had been accommodated through the CPA partially only because of external pressure.

Indeed, soon after the signing of the CPA the SPLM/A leadership's dream of a democratic federal unitary Sudan was shattered due to the death of Garang, the widely popular leader of the movement. This reinvigorated the secessionist tendency within the SPLM/A, converting it into a dominant force within the movement during the remaining interim period. As a result, the cooperation between the NCP and the SPLM/A, which had already been hindered particularly by the NCP's intransigence due to its fear of losing power, became increasingly problematic, playing into the SPLM/A's interest to secure the referendum and rally the southern popular opinion for secession. Finally, the January 2011 referendum brought a landslide vote for secession with 98.83 per cent of the

registered southern Sudanese voting to separate and form an independent state, the Republic of South Sudan (SSRFRR, 2011).

After a period of uncertainty and speculation, protagonists of the international community decided to officially recognise the secession and the sovereign state of South Sudan after its declaration of independence on 9 July 2011. Expectedly, the SPLM/A's staunchest external allies, led by the US and Uganda, were among the most eager to recognise South Sudan, while others, for instance a number of other Arab states headed by Egypt, had hoped to maintain one 'Arab' Sudan. The UN, as well as the AU, also committed itself to recognise South Sudan, although the latter was initially wary due to its commitment to the integrity of the colonial borders. Since the formal independence of South Sudan, a number of African, Arab, European and Asian countries have also recognised the Africa's newest state although many harbour a fear that this might strengthen secessionism in other parts of Sudan and other states of the continent.

CONCLUSIONS

The calls for self-determination in Africa often draw from injustices emanating from exclusive governance by narrow elites who concentrate political and economic power to themselves. In Southern Sudan the calls for self-determination emerged as part of the local elite's orchestrated response to Khartoum's imposition of a form of state that was widely considered exclusive, locally alien and illegitimate ('northern problem'). It was also a culmination of their rejection of the Arabised Muslim governing elite's agenda of expanding its exclusive view of the nation, characterised by the use of the state to extend the boundaries of Arab culture and Islam to the southern periphery. Such imposition of a distinct social reality was seen as an attempt by the dominant to marginalise the local communities politically and economically. Thus, the opposition received wide local moral and physical support.

Essentially, the call for self-determination in Southern Sudan involved power competition between distinct regional elites in Sudan, focusing rights and resources that pit the Arabised Muslim governing elite and the state under its control against the southern elite. This politicised competition has taken a violent form largely because a particular concept of the state and the nation has been imposed. This has been achieved through attempts of assimilation or exclusion to transform local cultures and deliberately undermine livelihoods of the resistant groups in the peripheral areas. Thus, particularly after the CPA, the call for self-determination, initiated by a group within the southern elite, has opened a channel for the Sudan's marginalised communities in the peripheries (even beyond Southern Sudan) to express their grievances through

political regionalism to counter the perceived state-imposed marginalisation and subjugation also at times referred to as 'internal colonialism'.

The earliest collective response to the state campaign of exclusive cultural transformation through assimilation to 'Arab' culture and Islam was the southern call for a federal arrangement. However when the state rejected this demand and engaged in increasing repression from the mid-1950s onwards, more militant armed and non-armed opposition emerged, with southern leadership seeking recognition of self-determination through various approaches, including secession. The emergence of violent opposition set the stage for the state's securitisation of the southern issue, coining it as the 'southern problem'. As a result, the south was portrayed as a menace to the state's imagined unity based on 'Arab' culture and Islam, the main expressions of the Arabised Muslim elite's self-proclaimed identity which have been contrasted against religions and cultures practiced in Southern Sudan. In the process, the latter, already depicted as primitive or acultural during the colonial times, was now politicised as a threat supported principally by external imperialist and Christian actors.

Therefore, similar to other cases in Africa, secessionism was presented as a 'problem' as it became a threat to the leading elites holding state power in Sudan. The problematisation of the southern political movement allowed the governing elites to continue to portray the region as the 'Other', threatening the unity of Sudan, which allowed the justification of the use of violence as a legitimate mechanism to secure the integrity of the state. On the other hand, in Southern Sudan the state was viewed largely as an illegitimate 'Arab' dominated entity imposing authority based on unacceptable marginalisation based on social subjugation. The local elites in the south instrumentalised this sentiment against the perceivably 'marginalising state' in the process of decolonisation, along with the mounting fear and mistrust, and it was consolidated as the central pillar that sustained the call for self-determination manifested in federalism, demands for autonomy, power- and wealth-sharing and secessionism. As a result, in Sudan the 'southern problem' emerged in response to the 'northern problem'.

In this context, the CPA's self-determination provision can be considered as the culmination of the Southern Sudanese elite's struggle against marginalisation and for greater political and economic power. It has provided the SPLM/A leadership, which the war converted into the most powerful elite grouping in Southern Sudan, increasing control over the destiny of the region. But it has at the same time, continued to marginalise a number of those leaders and their constituencies who did not form part of the armed struggle on the side of the rebel movement. This continues to pose a problem beyond independence of South Sudan, as a number of groups and sections hold a variety of grievances against the current administration in Juba and its security forces. The current situation of centralised control concentrated on the SPLM/A controlled Gov-

ernment of South Sudan (GoSS) has strengthened calls for democratisation and wider devolution of power and resources to localities, and been politicised to the extent that it has fed local dissidence and organised violence against the GoSS representatives and institutions. As one prominent southerner put it, 'a number of small referendums are required [...] to address the current injustices', which to some extent resemble the reproduction of the earlier political dynamics 'northern problem' in Southern Sudan, and fighting against which many southerners had lost their lives.

The Anglophone problem and the secession option in Cameroon

Eric Ebolo Elong

INTRODUCTION

The Anglophone problem has stimulated extensive research and debates in Cameroon's history. There has been substantive publication on this subject especially by sociologists, anthropologists, historians, political scientists, lawyers and journalists. Nonetheless the focal point of these studies has always revolved around the causes, manifestation and impact of the Anglophone problem. This chapter departs from the above-mentioned premise by critically examining the circumstances that led to the emergence of this problem with emphasis on who is an Anglophone and the role of the Francophones and Anglophones in orchestrating the Anglophone problem. The Anglophone problem is defined by Ngoh as the desire of the inhabitants of former British Southern Cameroon (present-day Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon) to assert their identity on an equal basis with the Francophone, in the political, economic, social and the cultural life of the Cameroon nation (Ngoh 2004: 214).

This chapter attempts to analyse the historical antecedents which led to the emergence of an Anglophone problem in Cameroon with emphasis on the Anglo-French partition of the territory in 1919 and the constitutional arrangements which took place in Cameroon at post-independence. The chapter argues that the term 'Anglophone' is increasingly becoming ambiguous: especially as the term in the present context is exclusive, at a time when the term is emerging increasingly as one without borders (Ndobegang 2005). That is, many Cameroonians of Francophone descent are enrolling in the English schools and this further complicates who can be identified as Anglophone. Moreover, considering the fact that the British Southern Cameroons was administered as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria between 1922 and 1953 one can arguably state that its culture was Anglo-Nigerian.

The study identifies the major actors and steps taken by the Anglophones to internationalise their problem. It navigates into the formation of Anglophone pressure groups like the Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), Southern Cameroons People Organization (SCAPO), and Cameroon Anglophone

Movement (CAM) among others and their shift from a two state option to that of total independence of Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon. It also discusses the ramifications of this crisis as it threatens the national integrity of the nation and how the Bakassi Peninsula crisis has accentuated the increased clamour by the Anglophones to secede from the Republic of Cameroon. By and large, the chapter identifies the major implications of these movements in state-building and assesses how some Anglophone pressure groups have found a new expression in internationalising their plight through the Internet. The chapter holds that cyber nationalism has created an effective tool of networks of resistance to Biya's government policies and has increased momentum for the secession option. The Anglophones resorted to this option due to the determination by Presidents Ahidjo and Biya to weaken the federation and unitary state respectively at the expense of the Anglophone minority. It further analyses the implications of this problem on nation building in Cameroon.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ANGLOPHONE PROBLEM

Cameroon was annexed on 11 July 1884 by the Germans. The territory comprised of a multiplicity of ethnic groups and polities which varied in size and administrative system. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 in Europe further complicated the history of the country: Britain and France jointly invaded German Kamerun and defeated the Germans in 1916. On 17 March 1916 the territory was partitioned between the French and the British (Elango 1987: 9). The British sphere consisted of two disjointed, narrow strips of territory in the west stretching from Lake Chad to the Atlantic coast and bordering Nigeria. It comprised about one-fifth of the total area and population of Cameroon.

The French sphere consisted of the remaining four-fifths of the territory and population. In 1922, the League of Nations (LON) confirmed this division and authorised the British and French to administer their spheres as separate LON mandates, an arrangement which the UN later confirmed as UN trust territory (LeVine 1971: 17). The French part of the territory became known as French Cameroon whereas the British section became known as British Cameroons. It comprised of British Northern and Southern Cameroons and was administered separately by the Northern and Eastern Regions of Nigeria. British Southern Cameroons ceased to be administered as an integral region of Eastern Nigeria in 1954 when it gained a quasi-regional status from Nigeria.

In 1959, it became a full Region of the Federation of Nigeria. These arrangements almost led to the total neglect of British Cameroons in the political, economic and social development of the territory (Chem-Langhee 1997: 88). This led to the rise of nationalist movements in British Cameroons which later

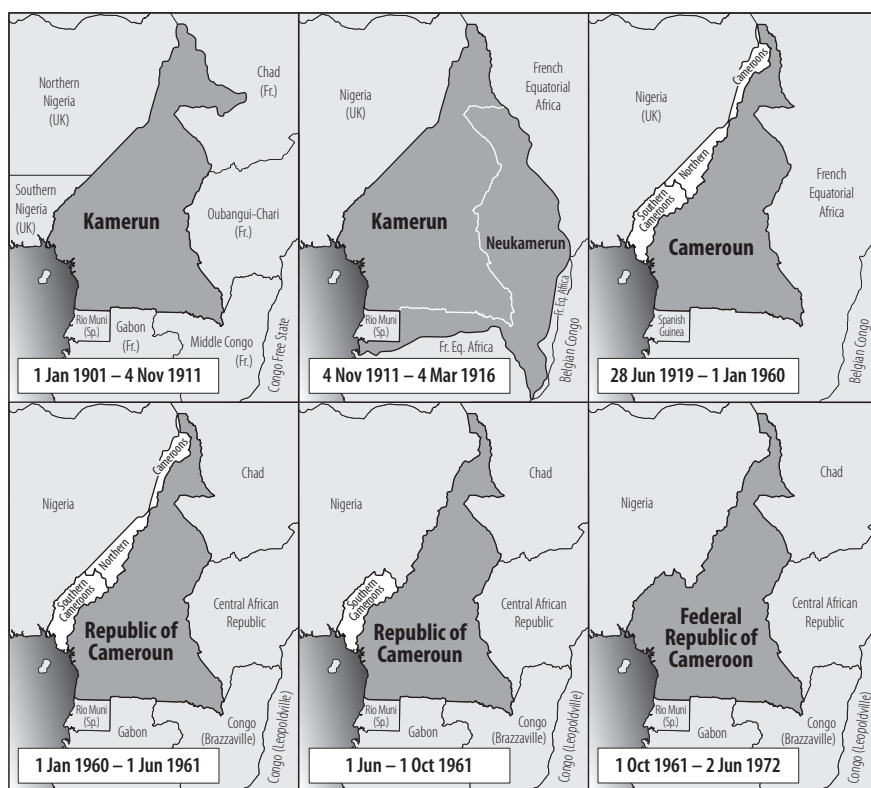


Figure 1: *The political evolution of the Cameroons*

culminated in a separate plebiscite in Northern and Southern Cameroons on 11 February 1961. The plebiscite questions warranted the people to choose independence by joining either Cameroon or Nigeria. British Southern Cameroon voted overwhelmingly to join French Cameroon which had hitherto gained independence on 1 January 1960 and became the Republic of Cameroon. British Northern Cameroon on the contrary voted to join the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The accession of independence and reunification of British Southern Cameroons with the Republic of Cameroon in 1961 led to the establishment of the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The constitutional arrangements that later ensued known as the Founban Constitutional Conference gave birth to the Anglophone Problem. Ahidjo's machinations to absorb and assimilate Anglophones into a Francophone state eliminating traces of Anglo-Saxon culture did not go unnoticed. The University of Yaounde was bilingual in theory but in practice French was the dominant language. There were attempts by some French Cameroonian authorities to Frenchify the Anglophone General Certificate Examination (GCE) (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 213). In other cases there was discrimination in educational and training opportunities.

The state system was completely centralised, especially with the emasculation of multiparty politics in 1966. West Cameroon gradually witnessed its Anglophongness vanishing as structures were put in place to facilitate a centralised federation in order to weaken the autonomy of the states. In 1972, Ahidjo hastily called for a referendum. This led to a centralised state system dominated by the Francophones. His successor, Paul Biya continued the process of assimilation by changing the name of the territory in 1984 from the United Republic of Cameroon to Republic of Cameroon, the name which French Cameroon adopted when it achieved independence in 1960. This galvanised the Anglophone movements and by 1985 they started calling for a separate state. What factors therefore orchestrated this problem?

COLONIALISM

Nicodemus Fru Awasum (1998) argues that the genesis of the Anglophone Problem in Cameroon owes its roots to the partition of the territory by Britain and France in 1916. This unequal partition of the country between the two powers, with France getting the lion's share sowed the seeds of future problems: the emergence of a reunified Cameroon, of an Anglophone minority and a Francophone majority. Moreover, in terms of population and size of the territory, British Southern Cameroon which later became known in the federation as West Cameroon constituted just one-ninth of the size of French Cameroon (East Cameroon) and in terms of population the ratio was 1:8.

In terms of socio-economic developments, East Cameroon was very advanced compared to West Cameroon which suffered from British neglect. The East Cameroon economy was based on entrepreneurship and industrialisation. East Cameroon had close to 700 industrial firms which included food and chemical, textile and aluminum industries and water and electricity power production. In contrast, West Cameroon had only about 27 industrial firms, most of which were plants for agricultural product and investment in the industrial sector was very low (Benjamin 1985: 191). In terms of road infrastructure, schools and other social amenities, East Cameroon had an edge over West Cameroon. Furthermore, the two territories over the years have developed two different (albeit opposing) styles and attitudes in matters of language, governance and basic freedoms. A once united colonial territory over 45 years developed to become two distinct countries separated in international relations and law (Ndobegang 2005).

The reunification of the two Cameroons set a precedence which would hitherto expose loopholes against the Anglophone minority. For instance at the time of reunification, West Cameroon was in a disadvantageous position especially owing to the fact that French Cameroon had gained independence

in 1960 unlike the former which only gained its independence by joining the Republic of Cameroon in 1961. However, prior to colonialism, the territory was comprised of various ethnic groups and polities which varied in size, culture and administration. The Northern part of the territory was Islamised in the nineteenth century whereas the Southern part was predominantly dominated by the forest and grassland peoples with different attitudes towards administration, religion and culture. None theless, with the establishment of colonialism, these fault lines were exploited by the colonialists, mainly to facilitate their exploitation of the resources. Moreover, British Southern Cameroons was made up of two regions with very distinct characteristics: the Northwest and Southwest regions made up of grassland and forest peoples respectively who had deep cultural differences which have been exploited by both the colonial and postcolonial administrations.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS

The 1961 Federal Constitution which was drafted at Foumban laid the foundation of the Anglophone problem. Although it was approved by John Ngu Foncha (Prime Minister of Southern Cameroon and leader of the Anglophone delegation) and Ahmadou Ahdjo (President of the Republic of Cameroon and leader of the Francophone delegation), the Constitution triggered the discord that has led to the clamor for secession by the Anglophones. The establishment of a federation was seen as the best option for British Southern Cameroonians since it would preserve the cultural identity and language of the two states. Moreover, the federation was to guarantee the evolution of a bicultural society in which the distinctive characteristics of the two Cameroons would be protected and preserved.

The exact opposite took place in Foumban: a centralised federation was created at the expense of the autonomy of the states. British Southern Cameroons fate was sealed by articles 5, 6, 15, 47 and 59. Articles 5 and 6 deprived the states of control over various institutions such as administration, national defence, foreign affairs, higher education and scientific research. Article 15 invested a great deal of power in the hands of the president at the expense of the states. The President of the Federal Republic could when circumstances so required proclaim by decree a state of emergency. Article 47 stated in part that, 'Any proposal for the revision of the present constitution which impairs the unity and integrity of the Federation shall be inadmissible.' The other section of Article 47 also stipulated that the president of the federal republic could revise the constitution after consultation with the deputies of the Federal Assembly (Nkwi 2004: 197).

Article 59 stated that the constitution shall be published in French and English, the French text being more authentic. It is instructive to note that among other things the constitution failed to mention anything on revenue allocation in spite of the fact that West Cameroon would give up its sources of customs and other revenue. This made West Cameroon entirely dependent on the federation, especially Ahidjo as the Head of State. Having examined the roots of the Anglophone Problem, the next section of this article shall dwell on a definition of an Anglophone and the major reasons why Anglophone pressure groups have opted for secession from the Republic of Cameroon. It should be borne in mind that we can only understand the Anglophone Problem if a proper analysis is made on who is an Anglophone.

WHO IS AN ANGLOPHONE IN CAMEROON?

The definition of Anglophone in the Cameroonian context has led to many debates and contradictions among many authors. In fact, the term or concept is understood differently by scholars. According to the *Advanced Learners Cambridge Online Dictionary* an Anglophone is a person who speaks English especially in areas where other languages are spoken. Geographically they are located west of the Mungo River and are found in the present-day Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon.

If one locates the Anglophones from the above-mentioned region, it also leads to another striking question: can somebody who has acquired Anglophone education also be called Anglophone? Or if somebody expresses his or herself in English can the person be called Anglophone? What about someone whose parents lived in former British Southern Cameroons or better still, someone whose ancestry is from the former British Southern Cameroons but his education is French. By and large, even before reunification, the sociological and/or ethnic component of the people of British Southern Cameroon had changed considerably with the migration of people to the west of Mungo either in search of jobs in German plantations or due to the harsh policies of French colonial rule. All these questions still pose a problem in defining an Anglophone.

Luc Sindjoun, a political scientist of Francophone descent opines that the Anglophone identity can only be claimed by inhabitants belonging to one of the former Southern Cameroons' indigenous ethnic groups (Sindjoun 1998). In fact, this distinction tends to exclude immigrants from Southern Cameroonian citizenship and this hitherto makes being an 'Anglophone' more of a geographic and an administrative reality than a cultural one. This further blurs the definition of an Anglophone as it has generated not only a new crisis of citizenship among the Anglophones but also the birth of the 'Eleventh Province.' The idea of the 'Eleventh Province' is ambiguous since Cameroon has 10

provinces and not 11. The idea was promoted by inhabitants from former East Cameroon who migrated into the present-day Southwest region of Cameroon during the German colonial rule in search for jobs in plantations and trading opportunities. During the re-introduction of multiparty politics in the 1990s some elite associations in the Southwest region excluded them on grounds that they were non-indigenes of the region, hence the term 'Eleventh Province', because these people could neither link their identity to the area of their origin in East Cameroon nor West Cameroon which has been their home for almost a century.

Walter Gam Nkwi (Nkwi 2004: 188) rejects Sindjouns definition by asserting that those Cameroonians who moved from French Cameroon to Southern Cameroons for various reasons married and gave birth to children and raised them up in the Anglo-Saxon culture, yet they could still trace their origins from French Cameroon. The question is how to categorise these children? In addition, after the reunification of the two Cameroons, civil servants from West Cameroon were transferred to East Cameroon where they also inter-married with French Cameroonians and trained their children in French schools. From the above-mentioned arguments he poses the question: are these children Anglophones or Francophones? He then defines an Anglophone as an indigene in Cameroon whose first foreign culture is Anglo-Saxon and whose first problem is that of identity within a cultural milieu which is 85 per cent Gaullic; the second problem is that of language and the third is equal opportunity with his or her fellow Francophone counterpart. His problem is the fear of cultural extinction and politico-economic marginalisation (Nkwi 2004, 188).

Other experts in Cameroon history like Lovett Z. Elango question the usage of the term 'Anglophone'. Elango contends that British Southern Cameroon from 1916 to 1954 was administered as an integral part of Nigeria, often regarded as a colonial liability according to British administrators. Victor T. LeVine (LeVine 1971) takes the argument further by asserting that by administering the territory as part of Nigeria, the British envisaged that it would eventually become an integral part of Nigeria. The territory had neither a budget nor separate public accounts; all its government revenues were treated as part of a common fund. The British thought it will be stupid to spend or waste taxpayers' money and talent on a territory that was not strictly speaking, a developing British colony (Kale 1967). This was due to the fact that British Cameroons was administered as a colony within Nigeria. More so, British policy of integration with Nigeria only contributed to the economic neglect of Southern Cameroons. Economic activities were in the hands of Nigerians and not British firms; in fact very little investment was undertaken by the British.

The civil service in British Southern Cameroon was also dominated by the Nigerians. Educational opportunities and training could only be accessed in Nigeria. Little wonder over 90 per cent of the Southern Cameroon elites were

trained in Nigeria. British Southern Cameroon was even referred to as 'a colony within a colony.' During the era of nationalism in British Southern Cameroon, anti-Nigerianism replaced anti-colonialism. Hence, Elango concludes that British Southern Cameroons culture cannot be exclusively termed Anglo-Saxon because it was rather Anglo-Nigerian. However, any concise and appropriate definition of an Anglophone must take into consideration the ethnic, linguistic, regional and cultural components of British Southern Cameroon and the steps taken by the Francophone leadership to obscure their identity and rights to self-determination through constitutional 'manipulations'.

ANGLOPHONE ARGUMENTS FOR SECESSION

The liberalisation of Cameroon's political landscape in the 1990s led to the rise of several Anglophone pressure groups. Although their main aim was to re-assert the identity of Anglophones marginalised by the Francophones, there was a shift from their original goal: a return to a two-state federation or the secession option. By the two-state option, the Anglophones wanted a return to the 1961 status which made Cameroon a Federal Republic with two states, namely West and East Cameroon. However, when they realised that the Francophone leadership was not prepared to re-establish the status-quo, they resorted to the secession option which will make West Cameroon a sovereign and independent state. Nonetheless the All Anglophone Conference (AAC) which took place in 1993 in Buea presented a memorandum defining the plight of Anglophones and what constitutional amendments they wanted. The document was named the *Buea Declaration* and was handed to President Biya. Some of the arguments were real and objective whereas others imagined, lopsided and biased. In this section of the article the author shall state the political, economic, and socio-cultural issues raised by Anglophones for a separate state and critically analyse their validity.

POLITICAL GRIEVANCES

The political grievances advanced by the Anglophone are many but they included among other things the gradual process of assimilation adopted by the Ahidjo and Biya governments instead of safeguarding the cultural peculiarities of the two states. The federal system was established in 1961 and dismantled in 1972 following the referendum. In fact, Ahidjo was empowered by the federal constitution to use decrees.

Moreover, in order to obscure the federal structure and make it ineffective, in 1962 Ahidjo signed a presidential decree dividing the federation into six

administrative units, each placed under a federal inspector (Fanso 2009: 10). West Cameroon constituted one of the administrative units. The federal inspector was directly accountable to Ahidjo and this undermined the powers of the Prime Minister and authority of the federated states, especially that of West Cameroon.

Please refer to Figure 1. above to see the political evolution of Cameroon. The first map is a representation of German Kamerun before 1911. The second map shows a larger Kamerun due to Franco-German Duckbill Agreement of 1911 over Morocco. Among other things, the Germans agreed to relinquish their interest over Morocco in exchange for French territories in Equatorial Africa which the Germans termed NeuKamerun. The third map of Cameroon shows the partition of Cameroon in 1919 with the area in red representing British Cameroon which was made up of British Southern and Northern Cameroons, whereas the area in blue represents French Cameroon. The fourth map represents the two Cameroons but by 1 January 1960, the area in green that is former French Cameroon, had gained the independent status of being called the Republic of Cameroon. British Cameroons in red only assumed the status of independence by 1961 with British Northern Cameroon joining Nigeria and the Southern part merging with the Republic of Cameroon. The fifth map represents Cameroon during reunification especially as the British Southern Cameroons officially reunified with the Republic of Cameroon on 1 October 1961. The last map shows the Federal Republic of Cameroon which existed from 1 October 1961 to 2 June 1972.

During Biya's tenure of office he signed a presidential decree in 1984 changing the name of the country from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon. This angered the Anglophones because this was the name French Cameroon (Republic of Cameroon) adopted during independence in 1960. The Anglophone pressure groups accused the leadership of annexing them. However, it suffices to state here that before changing the name of the country, Biya consulted the parliament although the deputies were of doubtful legitimacy since they were voted in a single list system and the national assembly itself was a rubber stamp. The single list system created skirmishes in many constituencies: most of the people selected were not based on their popularity within the constituency but more on the connection to the Central Committee of the ruling party. The list was imposed on the electorates without conducting elections in the various constituencies; many of the parliamentarians elected in the national assembly in Yaounde did not gain legitimacy from the electorates because they were imposed on their constituents and the ruling party ascertained their victory in elections.

Other issues that have reverberated in the minds of the Anglophones since their union with French Cameroon have been the secondary role they exercise in matters of public affairs. Since 1961 no Anglophone has held the post

of Minister of Territorial Administration, Defence, Education, Finance, and never has an Anglophone headed state parastatals like the *Société Nationale de Raffinage* (SONARA), and *Société Nationale des Hydrocarbures* (SNH). To confirm the secondary position of the Anglophones in Cameroon, Joseph Takougang asserts that '37 of the 47 Senior Prefects in Cameroon in 1991 were Beti (Francophones) as were three-quarters of the directors and general managers of the parastatals, and 22 of the 38 high-ranking bureaucrats who had been appointed in the newly created office of Prime Minister.' In many of the cases cited above on under-representation, the Francophones have often counteracted that these are cases of regional balance. However, this does not seem to be.

ECONOMIC GRIEVANCES

The establishment of the federal system of government was more of a shadow than the reality. In 1962, further steps were taken by Ahidjo to obscure the federal system. The Franc CFA was introduced in West Cameroon and the West African sterling was squeezed out of the territory. In 1964, the metric system replaced the imperial system of weights and measures (Fanso 2009: 11). Moreover, many Anglophones accuse the Francophones of exploiting their resources without redress and commensurate regional development. The proceeds from the oil produced in the Southwest region has never been re-invested in the area. Moreover, they accuse the Francophones of destroying the small scale enterprises in West Cameroon in favour of Francophone dominated institutions.

The demise of West Cameroon Development Authority (WCDA), Cameroon Bank (CB) and Powercam is blamed on the Francophones (Ndobegang 2005). Nonetheless, a critical appraisal of some of these accusations will be of paramount importance. A Commission of inquiry was set up by Augustine Ngom Jua (the Prime Minister of West Cameroon), in 1968 to investigate on the decline of these corporations. The Commission attributed its failures first and foremost to the incompetence of its directors. West Cameroonians were very concerned about the demise of the West Cameroon Bank and Powercam because it increased their dependence on French Cameroonian banking institutions and with the fall of Powercam power supply would only come from the East (French Cameroon).

What worsened matters was the fact that the appointment of its board members was not based on their competence and qualifications but more on their political affiliations (Ekali 2004: 103). It suffices to point out that the neglect of British Southern Cameroons also contributed to the underdevelopment of the area. The civil service was dominated by the Nigerians and after the plebiscite many of them returned to their country of origin, leaving West Cameroon with a dire need of experts at various levels of the economy.

ANGLOPHONE PRESSURE GROUPS

In 1985, a prominent Anglophone lawyer and traditional ruler, Fon Gorji Dinka was arrested for distributing pamphlets to Anglophones which declared the Biya government unconstitutional and asked for the former Southern Cameroons to secede from the Republic of Cameroon and re-named it the Republic of Ambazonia. This was a reaction against Biya's change of the country's name in 1984. Following the political liberalisation in the 1990, several associations and pressure groups were created or reactivated by Anglophone elites to represent and defend their interests.

Originally some advanced outright secession like the Free West Cameroon Movement (FWCM) and the Ambazonia Movement (AM). Others championed a return to the federal system like the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM) and the All Anglophone Conference (AAC) (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 217). Some Anglophone pressure groups with a more restricted agenda were Teachers Association of Cameroon (TAC) and Confederation of Anglophone Parents-Teachers' Association (CAPTAC). These two mounted pressure on the government for educational reforms and this led to the establishment of the General Certificate of Education Board (GCEB).

Despite the efforts of the above-mentioned associations, the course of the Anglophone Problem has been emboldened by two pressure groups: Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC) and Southern Cameroons People Organization (SCAPO). The former was founded after the second All Anglophone Conference in 1994 at Bamenda. Their original agenda was a two-state federation but with the outright condemnation of the pressure group by the government—it shifted its stance to secession. Its founding President was Barrister Elad Ekontang. The latter organisation canvassed for secession, its activities include sabotage and most of its leaders are based in Nigeria.

THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE ANGLOPHONE PROBLEM

The SCNC and its youth wing, the Southern Cameroon Youth League (SCYL) adopted several strategies to create awareness and embolden support for the creation of an Anglophone state. SCAPO accelerated her efforts by aligning with other secessionist movements in the Bakassi Peninsula. SCAPO even denounced the ICJ 2002 verdict, which accorded the Peninsula to Cameroon. These pressure groups tried to gain recognition by courting international organisations.

In 1995, they sent a delegation to the UNto protest against the change of the territory's name from United Republic of Cameroon to Republic of Cameroon. This delegation was led by John Ngu Foncha and Solomon Tandeng Muna,

both widely considered Anglophone architects of the federal and unitary state (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 221). This mission to the UN publicised the Anglophone problem and the delegation was officially welcomed when they crossed the Mungo River.

Furthermore, both SCAPO and SCNC used petitions, motions, memoranda, letters and even litigation to broaden their appeal. A striking example was their constant petitions against Cameroon's membership into the Commonwealth of Nations. During the 1993 visit of the Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku to Cameroon, the SCNC and other Anglophone pressure groups seized the opportunity to familiarise him with their plight. In 1993, two Anglophones attended the Commonwealth summit at Nicosia, Cyprus.

They complained about Biya's oppression of the Anglophone minority and beseeched some prominent Commonwealth delegates to vote against Cameroon's request for membership. In the 1995 Commonwealth Summit at Auckland, New Zealand, the SCNC pleaded for a Quebec-style independence referendum. Despite their efforts to bar Cameroon from being granted membership, the country was admitted into the Commonwealth on 1 November 1995 (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 221).

These associations intensified their struggle for autonomy by constantly suing the government of Cameroon on their right to self-determination. In 2003, a group of Southern Cameroonians acting on behalf of the SCNC and SCAPO sued the government of Cameroon in the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). Their arguments for a separate state revolved around their constitutional and historical rights to statehood.

In 2004, thanks to the efforts of the SCNC, Southern Cameroons became a member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) (Anye 2008: 187). Through the UNPO, Southern Cameroon has been able to address certain organs of the UN especially the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). On its mission to the UNCHR, the SCNC went on the offensive by accusing the Republic of Cameroon of 'annexing, colonizing, and occupying' the former Southern Cameroons. These efforts however paid some dividends as gradually the association has gained some legitimacy from other international organisations. The most formidable way these pressure groups have attempted to increase their publicity and quest for statehood has been through cyber space, especially social media.

CYBER NATIONALISM AND THE ANGLOPHONE PROBLEM

Many Anglophone pressure groups have found currency in the Internet as a means of broadening their quest for nationhood. Since the Biya regime has declared the SCNC and SCAPO as terrorist organisations, very few Anglophones

have been able to oppose the regime from within. Many Anglophone elites of the Diaspora and at home have established websites and online blogs primarily to discredit the Biya government. SCAPO, SCYL AM and SCNC have established home pages of the Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon (Anye 2008: 187).

The websites of the above-mentioned groups are coordinated in Paris, Washington, London, Abuja, Brussels, Munich, Johannesburg and New York. These advocacy sites are very critical of the Cameroon government and informative on the current steps taken by the president to obscure their appeals. For example the interim Government of the Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon is found on <http://www.fdrsoutherncameroons.info> (Anye 2008: 187). Although the website has been inactive since 2010, it nonetheless provided basic information on the flag, national anthem and code of arms of the so-called Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon. In fact, all these have given the Southern Cameroons some credibility as an online nation. Most Anglophone Cameroonian scholars and professionals sympathetic to the Anglophone plight have also added their voices by donating money and carrying out extensive research and publications via the internet to galvanise the Anglophones and the international community as well. In 2006, the SCAPO again declared the independence of Southern Cameroons and called it Ambazonia.

The contents of the websites of these movements vary but nonetheless there are several commonalities; A code of independence, flag, history, the UN and the Southern Cameroons, national songs and the international boundary between Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroon (Anye 2008: 187). Another phenomenon which has dominated Anglophone cyberspace is blogging. Many activists and sympathisers have set-up blogs where they post information of the ongoing clamour for an Anglophone state. Dibussi Tande's blogging site www.dibussi.com, has strengthened the appeal of an Anglophone state. The SCYL led by Ebenezer Akwanga have also established blogging sites including www.gobata.com, www.fonlon.org, www.gagwane.org, www.martinjumbam.com.

The reaction of the Cameroon government against what it calls subversion has been brutal. The Biya government has made indiscriminate arrests of many activists. In other cases, several Anglophones have been imprisoned without trials. The government at times declares a state of alert on 1 October in each year. This date is usually honoured by Anglophone pressure groups and they seize the opportunity to declare their independence from the Republic of Cameroon. The Chairman of the SCNC, Chief Otun Ette Eyamba was arrested by the gendarmes on 9 February 2011 in Bali (Northwest region). The government claimed he wanted to sabotage the 11 February National Day celebrations.

The government has also adopted a policy of divide and rule. Just like his predecessor, President Biya adopted policies that aimed at weakening Anglophone unity and solidarity. In 1984 he signed a decree creating 10 provinces in

Cameroon from which he carved out the Northwest and Southwest provinces which further deepened the fault lines within the Anglophone community. Due to international pressure from home and abroad he re-introduced multiparty politics in 1990. In order to further obscure Anglophone demand for a separate state he made some important political appointments. Simon Achidi Achu was appointed Prime Minister of Cameroon in 1992 (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 225).

Biya later on capitalised on the divides between the northwest and the southwest regions and in 1996 appointed Peter Mafany Musonge, a Southwesterner as Prime Minister to replace Achidi Achu. Other elite associations were formed by prominent Anglophones mainly to jockey for positions in government. In the Southwest region, the Southwest Chiefs' Conference (SWECC) and the Southwest Elites Association (SWELA) were formed basically to counteract the dominance of the Northwesterners in the Southwest region and to lobby for appointments. In the Northwest, the Northwest Cultural and Development Association (NOCUDA) was also formed. Its major aim was to demonise the activities of Anglophone secession movements albeit also jockeying for positions in government.

The advent of these elite associations has weakened the growth and evolution of dissent in Cameroon and it is worth noting that these associations are aligned to Paul Biya's ruling party. The major debacle of the Biya government has been to censure the online activities of Anglophone bloggers and other cyber nationalist websites. On 10 March 2011, the Cameroon government suspended twitter messages on mobile phone networks. It accused the opposition parties especially the Social Democratic Front, which has a strong base in the Northwest region and the SCNC, of planning a mass demonstration like that of the Arab Spring.⁶

The Anglophone population's re-assertion of their identity through dissent has also paid some dividends. In 1993 the University of Buea was made a full-fledged university with English as the main language. In November 2010, the University of Bamenda was also created as an Anglo-Saxon University. Although the government has not recognised the existence of an Anglophone problem it has hitherto taken steps especially in the educational domain to grant some of the wishes of the Anglophones. Some positions in government which were reserved for Francophones, have been allocated to Anglophones. However, the political system is still overwhelmingly dominated by the Francophone and attempts at Frenchification have not abated. This is witnessed in the socio-cultural, political and economic domains of the state system.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, the author has argued that partition of Cameroon between the French and the British opened the floodgates of an eminent threat to national integration which was later witnessed at reunification. The cultural and linguistic differences between Anglophones and Francophones, and the determination of the Anglophone minority to assert itself on the political chess-board have threatened the national integration of Cameroon. Furthermore, the Anglophones initially demanded a two-state federation to legitimate their Anglo-Saxoness, but the fact that the Francophone authorities have consistently pursued policies that are detrimental to the interests of the Anglophones, has given the impression that the Francophone leadership is generally distrustful of Anglophones and hence taken concrete steps to destroy their identity (Chem-Langhee 1997: 97).

The Anglophone political leaders, especially Foncha and Muna, the architects of federalism and the unitary state respectively were naïve and impervious as we observed above. The 1961 Fomuban constitutional talks witnessed a division among the Anglophone delegation between the Foncha government and the opposition. Article 59 which gave the English Language a secondary position to French was voted by these leaders. Besides, if the elites could surrender their most cherished linguistic asset, the English Language, then one could state that they did not have the interest of the Anglophones at heart.

The political liberalisation of the 1990s did not go unnoticed. The number of pressure groups created by Anglophone elites indicated the need for equal participation with their Francophone counterparts in the political system. Their demand for a separate state has not been heeded to by the Biya government. Despite the heavy clampdown on some SCNC activists by the regime in power, the Internet has offered a unique opportunity to galvanise the Anglophone plight. It has broadened its appeal internationally and has made the SCNC and SCAPO gain recognition both from within and from without. The Anglophone desire for self-determination has been compounded by the split between the Northwest and Southwest region. This has been exploited by the Biya regime mainly to weaken the quest of nationhood by Anglophones and to deepen the fault lines between the two regions. The lack of a united voice for the Anglophones continues to be its Achilles heel.

Manumission from black-on-black colonialism

Sovereign statehood for the British Southern Cameroons

Carlson Anyangwe

INTRODUCTION

The right to self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity are sometimes presented as oppositional concepts. But they are not necessarily so. In this chapter, the author considers successful self-determination claims in the past two decades, highlighting the interplay of the right to self-determination and the concept of territorial integrity, including the principle of *uti possidetis* and the obligatory non-recognition of territorial changes. I then proceed to briefly argue the British Southern Cameroons' case for sovereign statehood.

Successful self-determination claims since the end of European colonisation constitute evidence of state practice borne out of the conviction that contemporary human rights law recognises self-determination as a continuing right that is not necessarily inconsistent with the principles of *uti possidetis* and respect for territorial integrity. The right to self-determination, which now has the character of *jus cogens*, is not only a procedural right available in the process of decolonisation and by which the inhabitants of a colonial territory freely decide their political status. It is also a substantive human right, the right of all peoples to self-rule or to sovereign statehood and, like all human rights it is inherent, continuing, unquestionable and inalienable. It may be invoked by a people subjected to circumstances such as domination, oppression, genocide, colonisation, and other gross human rights abuses, and is available even in the context of a decolonised country.*

AFRICA, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, *UTI POSSIDETIS*, AND TERRITORIAL CHANGES

The well-established principle of territorial integrity protects the geographical space that *legally* belongs to a state and is secured by a series of consequential rules, namely, rules prohibiting interference within the domestic jurisdiction of a state, rules forbidding the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity

and political independence of states, rules imposing respect for borders as they were on the date of independence, and the rule of obligatory non-recognition of territorial changes brought about in breach of international law. The principle serves two basic purposes. It gives legal protection to the legitimate territorial configuration of a state, and so necessarily frowns on secession and annexation/occupation. It confines the exercise of territorial sovereignty to the spatial area that *lawfully* belongs to the state and, by necessary implication, forbids territorial expansion or other forms of imperialism.

The principle of *uti possidetis* (literally translated to: 'as you possess, you shall continue to possess') ordains that a state shall continue to possess the same amount of territory it possessed as of a particular critical date which, for de-colonised states, is the date of independence. This principle sanctifies succession to colonial boundaries as they stood on the date of independence by the successor state. Frontiers do not disappear when decolonisation or state succession takes place. Nascent states may not therefore change the colonially-inherited territorial status quo by extending their boundaries.

In 1964, African leaders adopted a resolution on Border Disputes among African States by which they pledged 'to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence.' This principle is reiterated in Article 4 b of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and also in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. Arguably, the principle has now crystallised into, and acquired the status of, a rule of African regional customary international law and is therefore binding on African states. Like the principle of territorial integrity, *uti possidetis* is meant to prevent irredentist claims and expansionism.

In the *Frontier Dispute Case (Burkina Faso v. Mali)* of 1985 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) observed that *uti possidetis* has exceptional importance for the African continent due to the fact that the primary aim of the principle is to secure respect for the territorial boundaries which existed at the time an African territory achieved independence. The objective, the Court noted, is to accord pre-eminence to legal title, defined by frontiers, over effective possession as a basis for sovereignty. In the *Western Sahara Case* of 1975 the ICJ in its advisory opinion rejected Morocco's sovereignty claim to the Western Sahara based on such purely political expression as history or purely moral expression as personal allegiance. In the *Territorial Dispute Case (Libya v. Chad)* of 1994, the ICJ declared that once agreed, the boundary stands, for any other approach would vitiate the fundamental principle of the stability of boundaries, the importance of which has been repeatedly emphasised by the Court. The Court went on to state that a boundary established by treaty achieves a permanence, which the treaty itself does not necessarily enjoy. The treaty can cease to be in force without in any way affecting the continuance of the boundary. When the boundary has been the subject of agreement, the continued existence of that

boundary is not dependent upon the continuing life of the treaty under which the boundary is agreed. It follows, as the Court went on to point out, that in the case of succession to boundary treaties, the succession takes place not so much to the boundary treaty, but rather to the boundary as established by the treaty.

There has now emerged a generalised rule imposing a duty of non-recognition of territorial and other situations brought about in breach of international law (Starke: 1994). The origin of this rule may be traced to the Paris General Treaty of 1928, otherwise known as the Briand-Kellogg Pact. That treaty imposed an obligation on State Parties not to recognise any territorial situation brought about by war or other illegal means. The invalidity of territorial changes and treaties obtained through coercion or other illegal means was reiterated, as had been in a 1932 Resolution by the League of Nations, by the Stimson doctrine of non-recognition of territorial changes brought about in violation of international law. These pronouncements did not prevent the occupation and annexation of territory in Europe between 1933 and 1940. However, the principles they sought to uphold were to some extent vindicated by the restoration to certain states of the various territories that had been taken from them by force. For example, France got back Alsace-Lorraine which Germany had seized from her.

Furthermore, the principle of non-recognition of territorial changes and treaties brought about in violation of international law or in any way inconsistent with the purposes of the UN is reflected in a number of international instruments.** In its advisory opinion on the *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) Notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 of 1971* the ICJ articulated the principle of obligatory non-recognition in relation to the situation that prevailed in Namibia at the time. The Court ruled that the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia was illegal because of South Africa's refusal to submit to the supervision of UN organs, and that South Africa was therefore under an obligation to withdraw its administration from the territory immediately and to end its occupation thereto. The Court also said UN Members were under an obligation not to recognise the legality of South Africa's presence in Namibia and were to refrain from any acts and any dealings with the South African Government implying recognition of the legality of, or lending support or assistance to such presence and administration. In terms of this ruling therefore, the validity or effects of any relations entered into by any state with South Africa concerning Namibia were not to be recognised by the UN or any of its Members.

The principle of obligatory non-recognition appears settled as can be seen from the fact that the UN Security Council tends to include in resolutions binding on all UN Members an express prohibition of recognition of territorial changes brought about by the use of force or other illegal means. For example, resolutions on the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and on the four homelands

(Bantustans) which were granted 'independence' in 1976 by apartheid South Africa: Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei, and Venda. However, no explicit call was made for the non-recognition of the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia in 1975, the Western Sahara by Morocco in 1976, and the British Southern Cameroons by the contiguous French-speaking State of Cameroun Republic in September 1961. That notwithstanding, today, the East Timorese case is now only of historical and academic significance, due to the fact that that country emerged into sovereign statehood in 2004, despite Indonesia's earlier stubborn claim to the territory (cf. *Case Concerning East Timor*, 1993). By annexing East Timor, Indonesia was guilty of bringing about territorial change in breach of international law and of the principle of *uti possidetis*. Although Morocco illegally occupies the Western Sahara, the AU and many states have recognised the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic proclaimed by The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Saguia al-Hamra and the Rio del Oro (POLISARIO) in 1975. Moreover, the Western Sahara case is actively on the agenda of the UN. That leaves only the case of the British Southern Cameroons which needs urgently to be addressed by the UN as a matter of law and justice for, and the dignity and humanity of, the people of that erstwhile UN trust territory.

SELF-DETERMINATION CLAIMS IN THE RECENT PAST

POST-COLD WAR EUROPE

In Europe, successful self-determination claims took place in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and Czechoslovakia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was originally only the independent Kingdom of Serbia. After the Balkan wars, and from 1914 to the end of World War II, Serbia enlarged its boundaries by annexing Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and Montenegro. The new state thus created by expansion took the name 'Federal Republic of Yugoslavia'. From 1991 onwards, however, each of the component states of the Federation began to proclaim the restoration of its independence. Recognition quickly followed. The annexation of those countries by Serbia was a violation of international law and a breach of the principle of territorial integrity. Each component state having asserted its independence, Yugoslavia as a state simply ceased to exist. No question arose of its continuation or of succession to it by Serbia (which had ceased to exist as a kingdom). In 2008, Kosovo seceded from the Republic of Serbia by unilaterally declaring its independence, a move adjudged by the ICJ in its advisory opinion given in 2010 as not inconsistent with international law (*Kosovo Advisory Opinion*). In that case the ICJ referred copiously to the *South West Africa* decision in arriving at its opinion that 'general international

law contains no applicable prohibition on declarations of independence' and that Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008 did not violate general international law. The Court went on to clarify that the principle of territorial integrity is confined to the sphere of relations between states. That principle cannot be implicated especially in cases of the exercise of the right of self-determination against colonial rule, oppression, or expansionism.

The USSR, like Yugoslavia, came about as a result of the expansion of the Russian Federation through the absorption between 1922 and 1940 of a number of neighbouring countries to form what became the Soviet Union. But between 1990 and 1992, the various republics that had thus been absorbed by the Russian Federation proclaimed, one after the other, the restoration of their respective independence. Here too, recognition by other states quickly came. In fact, regarding the Baltic States, the European Community and the USA spoke of 'the restoration of the sovereignty and independence of those states.' The borders of the Russian Federation were now the ones it had before the onset of its annexation of other countries. There was therefore no difficulty in accepting that the Russian Federation was the continuation of and successor to the defunct USSR. The international community also had no difficulty recognising the independence of the former soviet republics. The Russian Federation's expansionism had been a breach of international law and the principle of territorial integrity.

For centuries the Czech-inhabited territories of Bohemia and Moravia were part of Austria-Hungary, Slovakia being part of Hungary. Following World War I, Slovakia broke away from Hungary, and the Czech-inhabited territories of Bohemia and Moravia broke away from Austria-Hungary. With the support of Slovak leaders, the Czechs formed a provisional government that lasted from 1914 to October 1918, the date when Czech and Slovak leaders proclaimed the Republic of Czechoslovakia. In 1939, Hitler dissolved that Republic, granted Slovakia autonomy and made Bohemia and Moravia German protectorates. Later in the same year, Slovakia proclaimed its independence. But after World War II the Republic of Czechoslovakia was restored and came under the Soviet sphere of influence. Following the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Slovakia on 17 July 1992 once again unilaterally declared its independence. A week later, Czech and Slovak leaders agreed on a basic plan for a peaceful separation of Czechoslovakia into two independent states. The international community again had no difficulty in accepting that consensual velvet dissolution and the two independent sovereign states that emerged from the peaceful separation. No breach of either international law or the principle of territorial integrity was involved.

POST-INDEPENDENCE AFRICA

The point needs reiteration from the onset that contrary to what has sometimes been claimed, African states have never unanimously, or even in the majority, subscribed to the view that self-determination applies only to peoples under European colonisation and (Anyangwe 1998: 657; Anyangwe 2009: 153). A number of self-determination claims have arisen in post-independence Africa, the first being that of Eritrea.⁷ Eritrea was historically part of the Abyssinian Kingdom of Aksum. In 1890 it became an Italian colony until 1941 when it was captured by British forces and, 10 years later, in 1952 the UN awarded it to Imperial Ethiopia as part of a federation. In 1962, Ethiopia abolished the federation and annexed Eritrea as its province. Eritrea rejected the annexation and launched an armed struggle for independence, which lasted for 31 years. Independence came on 24 May 1993 and was quickly recognised by the world. The world had no difficulty recognising Eritrea because its independence was consistent with the exercise of the right of people to self-determination. Ethiopia's annexation of Eritrea was territorial change brought about in violation of both international law and the principle of *uti possidetis*.

Another African country with a self-determination claim is the Western Sahara. The territory was under Spanish rule from 1884 to 1975, when Spain hurriedly withdrew from the territory after handing it over to both Morocco and Mauritania. The hand-over was rejected by POLISARIO which immediately proceeded to proclaim the territory's independence as the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Morocco invaded and annexed the territory in April 1975. This did not prevent the SADR from being recognised by many states and the Organisation of African States/African Union. The recognition is consistent with the right of peoples to self-determination and does not violate the principle of territorial integrity. The borders of Morocco became frozen on 2 March 1956, the date on which it gained independence from France. The Western Sahara was not comprised within those borders. Morocco, like Imperial Ethiopia and like expansionist Republic of Cameroun before it, is guilty of imperialism and of bringing about territorial change in violation of international law. In 2011 Republic of Cameroun dispatched its National Assembly president, Mr Cavayé, to Morocco and in what could, in a turn of linguistic licence, be described as a 'joint criminal enterprise', both countries declared support for each other's expansionism.

It has been more than 20 years since Somaliland asserted its independence from the Republic of Somalia, but that country is still unrecognised though its government appears to enjoy *de facto* recognition. British Somaliland and Italian Somalia gained independence from their respective colonial powers a few days from each other in June 1960. On 1 July 1960 the two countries united to form the Republic of Somalia. In 1991, the state president fled the

country following a coup d'état. In the same year the former British Somaliland proclaimed the restoration of its independence under the name of Republic of Somaliland, and took measures to establish an effective government over the whole of Somaliland. By contrast, the former Italian Somalia fell under the control of territorial warlords and quickly became a weak link for Al Qaeda to inroad into Africa. In 1992 the UN declared the country without a government and it has remained so with the attendant violent chaos. A government and other organs of state for Somalia as a whole had ceased to function or to exist. No country has so far given the Republic of Somaliland *de jure* recognition even though it has an effective government running its affairs, is peaceful, and has held free and fair elections. But recently the AU has declared that its non-recognition of the Republic of Somaliland needs revisiting. The reason is that the old Republic of Somalia has collapsed, and after more than 20 years it is no longer tenable to maintain the fiction that it still exists. Attempts to impose a co-existence by horse whip are unlikely to succeed. Besides, the restoration of the independence of Somaliland does not affect the territorial integrity of ex-Italian Somalia.

The Southern Sudan is a classic case of a successful secessionist bid brought about through a deft combination of force and negotiation. Following 25 years of war between North and South Sudan, the AU and the rest of the international community brokered an arrangement whereby the people of Southern Sudan were given full internal autonomy for six years, at the end of which they voted in a self-determination referendum to separate from the rest of Sudan and to establish a sovereign independent state. On 9 July 2011 independence was achieved under the name of Republic of South Sudan. The case of South Sudan is one of imposed consensual secessionist self-determination. Southern Sudan formed part of the Republic of Sudan at the time the country achieved independence from Britain on 1 January 1956 and through decades of armed struggle it succeeded, with outside assistance, in bringing the Khartoum Government to the negotiation table and to wring from it a self-determination agreement which was then presented as a consensual separation.

Southern Sudan's 'consensual' secession is a permissible breach of the principle of territorial integrity. It is well known that the people of Southern Sudan were for a long time dominated and oppressed by those of the North. For a quarter of a century they waged an armed struggle to liberate themselves from the bonds of domination. In that sort of situation, where the territory of the oppressed people forms part of the territory that achieved independence from colonial rule the principle of territorial integrity yields, as a matter of human rights and justice, to the principle of self-determination. In other words, in certain situations secessionist self-determination may be so compelling as to prevail over the principle of territorial integrity, as happened when East Pakistan seceded from the rest of Pakistan in March 1971 to form the

independent state of Bangladesh– Pakistan itself having seceded from India in August 1947.

Apart from the South Sudan case, other separatist attempts in Africa have not fared better. But one has the distinct impression that some of these cases are still ‘work in progress’. For instance the movement for the ‘actualisation of Biafra’, the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) is still very active in Cabinda, and the Lozi in Zambia still consider self-determination for Barotseland achievable and that these claims appear to have assumed the character of a ‘second generation decolonization’ in Africa (Anyangwe 1998: 655). The Eastern Region of the Nigerian Federation broke away in 1968 and declared its independence under the name of Biafra (UN Monthly Chronicle 1970; Brownlie 1971). The Congolese province of Katanga in the 1960s and 1970s sought its independence from the rest of Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*Congrès du Peuple Katangais v. Zaire*). Until recently, the Senegalese province of Cassamance fought the central Government of Senegal in an apparent bid to break away but apparently a negotiated settlement seems to have been brokered through the good offices of the African Human Rights Commission. The Cabinda province in Angola has also tried unsuccessfully to break away. Similarly, Matebeleland in Zimbabwe and Barotseland in Zambia tried to break away but failed. There was a chorus of condemnation of the proclamation by Mali Tuaregs in May 2012 of independence over the northern two-third of Mali as the ‘Republic of Azawal’. It remains to be seen whether this latest secessionist bid in Africa will succeed. But clearly, in each of these cases the territory concerned formed part of the relevant state on the date of independence. Many would readily argue that to uphold these secessionist self-determination claims would be a violation of the territorial integrity of the state concerned.

However, evidence of oppression and domination would put these cases in the same category as that of Bangladesh, Kosovo, and South Sudan. It is significant that the five states that recognised Biafra *de jure* – Gabon, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Zambia – did so on grounds that Biafra was entitled to external self-determination, not on what was said to be humanitarian grounds. It would seem to be the case that compelling evidence of domination and oppression would need to be forthcoming before a secessionist self-determination claim can succeed. This is so because another powerful principle, that of territorial integrity, comes into play. By contrast, where a self-determination claim does not involve secession (and so the principle of territorial integrity is not at stake) the evidence in support of allegations of domination or oppression need not be forthcoming, and if forthcoming need not be overwhelming.

SOVEREIGN STATEHOOD FOR THE BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Between 1844 and 1862 the British signed a number of treaties with coastal chiefs of the geographical area that later became the British Southern Cameroons (Anyangwe 2010: 15–28; Ardener 1968: 53–69). In 1858 Britain took formal possession of that area and 30 years later, in 1887 ceded it to Germany (Hertslet 1967: 694); and it was incorporated into the contiguous *Kamerun* protectorate proclaimed by Germany three years earlier, in 1884. The ceded territory remained part of the *Kamerun* protectorate until 1914 when British forces recaptured it from the Germans. From 1922 until 1 October 1961 the territory was part of the Mandated, then Trust, Territory of the British Cameroons. It shares a common border with Nigeria to the west, along the frontier delimited in a boundary treaty between Britain and Germany (Anyangwe 2010: 49–60). It also shares a common border with the Republic of Cameroun to the east, along the frontier delimited between Britain and France (Anyangwe 2010: 60–85).

The British Southern Cameroons was fully self-governing from 1954 to 1961, operating a Westminster-type parliamentary democracy, had three free and fair elections, a peaceful regime change, and a Constitution (the Southern Cameroons Constitution Order-in-Council 1960) based on values of democracy, the rule of law, an independent judiciary, an open society, a free press, freedom of expression and movement, human rights and accountability. The British Southern Cameroons was thus able to grant asylum to thousands of economic and political refugees from French Cameroun. After seven years of full self-government, the British Southern Cameroons was poised for sovereign statehood as provided in Article 76 b of the UN Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (UNGA Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960). As Administering Authority, Britain assumed, under the UN Charter, the obligation to develop the British Southern Cameroons to independence. It also assumed an international obligation under the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to take immediate steps to transfer all powers to the people of the British Southern Cameroons without any condition or reservation, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom. By failing to transfer sovereign powers to the people of the British Southern Cameroons, Britain acted in breach of these obligations. That Britain acted contrary to its international obligations is conclusively proved by the following evidence.

In 1959 the British Government stated that ‘the Southern Cameroons would not be economically viable as an independent state’ according to the Sir Philipson Report. It is trite learning that economic viability has nothing to do with

achievement of political independence. Moreover, in the law of self-determination it is for the people to determine the destiny of the territory and not for the territory to determine the destiny of the people. In January 1960, Lord Perth, Minister of State at the Colonial Office shamefully declared, God-like, that 'the Southern Cameroons and its inhabitants are undoubtedly *expendable*' according to a de-classified secret memo from Lord Perth to Sir John Martin, dated 12 October 1960 (Anyangwe 2010: 629). During Anglo-Southern Cameroons talks in London in October 1960, Mr Iain Macleod the Secretary of State for the Colonies, declared that if the plebiscite went in favour of 'joining' Republic of Cameroun, arrangements would have to be made 'for the early termination of Trusteeship and *the transfer of sovereignty to Republic [of Cameroun]*' says a Report of the United Nations Plebiscite Commission of 1961. In June 1960 the British Government declared its firm opposition to an independent British Southern Cameroons in a declassified confidential memo RSF 13/6 of 3 June 1960:

We are not attracted by the idea of an independent Southern Cameroons because it would certainly not be able to pay its way and ... we are not at all anxious to have to do so on its behalf. We cannot expect to get any advantage from being foster mother to an independent Southern Cameroons and it is clear that it would have to be fostered by somebody. (Declassified confidential memo RSF 13/6 of 3 June 1960; Anyangwe 2010: 590)

This policy statement was repeated ad nauseam by Sir Andrew Cohen, Britain's Ambassador to the UN. In March 1961 the British Colonial Office disclosed that Nigeria was fully informed of 'the discussions on the hand-over of the Southern Cameroons to the Cameroun Republic (Colonial Office Brief of 7 March 1961). On 1 October 1961, Mr Hugh Fraser, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies informed the House of Commons that as he was speaking, the British Government has already '*transferred* the Southern Cameroons to Mr. Ahidjo' (House of Commons Debates, 1961, pp.1335–1351). A month later the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed his Cabinet colleagues that 'the *transfer of power* went smoothly' according to declassified Confidential Memo 240 C.C. (61) 192 of 28 November 1961. This overwhelming body of evidence strongly suggests that on 1 October 1961, the British Government transferred the British Southern Cameroons to a successor colonialist, the Republic of Cameroun, rather than allow the territory to emerge into independence as ordained under international law. Since the British Government exercised a colonial sovereignty over the territory it could not have transferred to Republic of Cameroun other than colonial sovereignty. The maxim of the law is *nemo dat non quod habet*. The very idea of a trust (tutelage or *fideicommissum*) meant the trusteeship was a transitional arrangement. The Administering Authority had

only delegated and limited authority in the Trust Territory. It did not enjoy an unrestricted plenitude of powers and thus could not for example annex, cede, transfer or otherwise dispose of the Trust Territory whether gratuitously or for value.

The United Nations and Britain initiated a dubious decolonisation process which they even failed to see through (Anyangwe 2009: 33-67). They imposed on the people of the British Southern Cameroons, on 11 February 1961, an infamous plebiscite that gave them a Hobson choice between 'independence by joining Nigeria' and 'independence by joining the Republic of Cameroun'. Distressed and traumatised by this, the people voted first and foremost to achieve independence and, as a subsidiary matter, expressed an intention to form a federal association with the Republic of Cameroun on certain terms and conditions. Republic of Cameroun reneged on each and every signed pre-plebiscite commitment made by it regarding the British Southern Cameroons and embarked on the path of imperialism. After the plebiscite, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 1608 (XV) on 21 April 1961 by which it declared the vote in favour of 'achieving independence by joining the Republic of Cameroun'. The Resolution went on to request 'the concerned parties' to 'finalize' the terms and conditions of 'joining', and set 1 October 1961 as the date of 'independence' of the British Southern Cameroons '*upon* [not '*by*'] it joining the Republic of Cameroun'. The Republic of Cameroun voted against that Resolution and by that act rejected the UN's endorsement of the plebiscite result and thereby also continued its international boundary with the British Southern Cameroons as unchanged. Strangely, the UN and the British Government took no steps to ensure that the 'finalisation' mandated by Resolution 1608 was satisfactorily effected.

In August 1961 the President of Republic of Cameroun dishonestly claimed in an address to his country's National Assembly that the United Nations, by its Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961, 'imposed on [our government] the obligation to adjust the institutional structures of Cameroun Republic so as *to received back a dismembered part of our country*'. One year later, in July 1962, he informed a gathering of his political party that there was only a minor tinkering with the Constitution of Republic of Cameroun so as 'to allow for part of the territory to rejoin the mother land, [that is], the return to Republic of Cameroun of a part of its territory' (*Recueils des Discours* 1968).

On 1 September 1961, the Republic of Cameroun passed a law in its Assembly amending its Constitution by providing for the annexation of the British Southern Cameroons claiming that the British Southern Cameroons is part of its territory returned to it by the UN and Britain. In the same month, the French-led forces of Republic of Cameroun marched into the British Southern Cameroons, killed several citizens, destroyed property and occupied the territory with the conspiratorial acquiescence of the British Government reveals

a declassified 'secret and personal' letter dated 9 June 1961 from JO Field to Christopher Eastwood; Anyangwe 2010:719; Deltombe et al. 2011: 481 et seq.) The Republic of Cameroun is still in armed occupation of the Southern Cameroons to this day. In September 1961 the British Southern Cameroons was still a Trust Territory under United Kingdom Administration. Yet, neither the UN nor Britain lifted a finger in the face of this annexation of the British Southern Cameroons, reminiscent, one would say, of Hitler's annexation of Austria in 1939. In spite of this aggression by Republic of Cameroun, its President was invited by the British Government to the British Southern Cameroons on 30 September 1961. Britain then formally transferred powers it exercised over the territory to him, hurriedly left the territory and has since acted Pontius Pilate each time it is reminded of its indecent abandonment of the British Southern Cameroons.

This conduct was an internationally wrongful act by the Administering Authority, the government which represented the people of the British Southern Cameroons internationally. Years ago, in the 1950 *International Status of South West Africa Case* the ICJ pointed out that a trust territory has legal personality and constitutes a subject of law, possessing national sovereignty though lacking the exercise thereof. Judge Ammoun stated that sovereignty does not cease to belong to the people of the trust territory but is, for a time being, simply rendered inarticulate and deprived of freedom of expression. The sovereignty of a trust territory, declared Judge McNair, is in abeyance until the inhabitants of the territory obtain recognition as an independent state. It inexorably follows that the illegal transfer of the sovereignty of the British Southern Cameroons to a third state and thus the non-recognition of the territory as an independent state mean the territory's national sovereignty, which belongs to its people, continues to be in abeyance and that the sovereignty exercised by Republic of Cameroun over the territory, which it administers as its adjunct, is nothing but a derivative and precarious colonial sovereignty.

In the political lexicon of Republic of Cameroun, 1 October 1961 is euphemistically reckoned as day of 'reunification'; but in fact it could be likened to the *Anschluss* (Germano-Austrian) decree in 1939 by Hitler. 1 October 1961 is the date on which that French-speaking country formally assumed a derivative colonial sovereignty over the British Southern Cameroons. The Southern Cameroons had already come under Republic of Cameroun's armed occupation a month earlier, in September. All that was left was for Republic of Cameroun to appoint one of its citizens as viceroy of the Southern Cameroons, which it lost no time in doing. The occupant of that office went under the official and apparently innocuous name of '*Son Excellence Monsieur l'Inspecteur Fédéral d'Administration*'. The term 'reunification' continues to be used to camouflage colonial occupation, a black-on-black colonialism. In June 1972, Republic of Cameroun proceeded to divide the Southern Cameroons into two

provinces, naming them as its ninth and tenth provinces, maintaining its imposed direct rule and by a hierarchy territorial administrators (known as *sous-prefets*, *prefets*, *gouverneurs*) operating in French and with a pernicious agenda to assimilate the people of the British Southern Cameroons and wipe out their identity and specificity by sinking them into the French-world of the Republic of Cameroun.

The UN is still unable to say the legal and political status of the British Southern Cameroons following Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961 and the indecent departure of the British on 1 October 1961 after its handover of the territory and its inhabitants to Republic of Cameroun, an exercise that was deceptively passed off as de-colonisation of the territory. For over 50 years now the stock response of the UN to the Southern Cameroons Sovereignty Question is that the British Southern Cameroons 'joined' Republic of Cameroun. But the evidence shows that annexation took place and not the federal association that was agreed upon by the two countries before the plebiscite. For its part, the British Government repeats evasively that its responsibility over the British Southern Cameroons ceased on 1 October 1961, the day UN trusteeship over the territory was 'validly' terminated.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

The inhabitants of the British Southern Cameroons are emphatically a people and constitute a unit of self-determination within the meaning of the right to self-determination. This is clear from various UN pronouncements regarding the inhabitants of the territory. This incontrovertible fact was recently reaffirmed by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in *Gumne v. Cameroun*, (Comm. No. 266/2003, 2009) in which the Commission declared that indeed the inhabitants of the Southern Cameroons qualify as a people within the meaning of international human rights law. The status of the inhabitants of the British Southern Cameroons as a people is thus beyond dispute. The people were under international tutelage from 1922 to 1961, and, in virtue of this international status deriving from an international system created under conventional international law, the British Southern Cameroons had international personality and was a qualified subject of international law. The British Southern Cameroons was self-governing from 1954 to 1961, and had limited self-government from 1961 to 1972 even while under the colonial occupation of the Republic of Cameroun.

The UN plebiscite held in the British Southern Cameroons on 11 February 1961 was indubitably based on the legal fact that the inhabitants of the British Southern Cameroons constitute a people within the meaning of the right to self-determination and have legal claim of title to their territory. The

Declaration on the Granting of Independence, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1960, specifically denotes the inhabitants of trust territories as a people. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961, in line with other resolutions concerning the British Southern Cameroons, took care to characterise the inhabitants of the territory as a people. The inhabitants of the British Southern Cameroons are indeed as much a people as are the inhabitants of the several former colonial territories. The estimated 6 million people of the British Southern Cameroons inhabit a separate, distinct and established territory, the frontiers of which are secured by international boundary treaties. They have linguistic unity in that English is the common language of public administration and the language of education in the country. They have a common legal culture based on the common law system, and a common system of education based on the English educational system. They have a common history going back to 1844 when the British first signed treaties with coastal chiefs, through 1858 when the British took possession of the coastal strip of what subsequently became the British Southern Cameroons. They have a sense of common belonging and collective destiny, the consciousness of being a people and the will to be identified as such.

It is not by mere chance that Articles 19 to 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights speak of 'peoples', in plural. This is an indication that the drafters of the Charter had in mind not only 'people' (singular) in the constitutional law sense of a country's citizens or population as a whole, often designated as the sovereign people. The drafters also had in mind an identifiable group of human beings with a common culture, value system, history, and language. These are denoted as 'peoples'. The inhabitants constituting the population of a country are the 'people' of that country and that population might well be made up of distinctive groups denoted as 'peoples'. It follows that the 'people' of a country is one element and the various distinctive groups (i.e. 'peoples') in the same country are another element. The Charter in its wisdom simultaneously confers the right to self-determination on 'people' and 'peoples'. That is why it speaks of '*all peoples*' in articles 19, 20, 21(1)(2), 22(1), 23(1), and 24. The Charter also imposes on states parties certain obligations in relation to the right to self-determination in articles 20(3), 21(4) (5), 22(2), and 23(2). The Charter's drafters deliberately declined to define the term 'people' so as not to end up in difficult discussions. However, a United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) meeting of international law experts in February 1990 in Paris, concluded that a collectivity of humans constitute a 'people' if it enjoys all or some of the following common features: common historical tradition, ethnic group identity, cultural homogeneity, linguistic unity, religious or ideological affinity, territorial connection, common economic life, and the will to be identified as a people or the consciousness of being a people.

Since the collectivity of human beings native to the British Southern Cameroons constitute the people of the territory and therefore citizens of the Southern Cameroons, it inexorably follows that they have, as a people, and in the language of Articles 19 and 20(1) of the Charter, the right to freedom from domination, the right to existence, and the ‘unquestionable and inalienable’ right to self-determination, by virtue of which they are entitled to ‘freely determine their political status’. They are entitled to sovereign statehood. This right is unyielding whether the right to self-determination is interpreted as applicable only in a colonial context or it is taken to be applicable in a non-colonial context as well. In the South West Africa Case Namibia of 1971, the ICJ was emphatic that the international law of self-determination creates a right to independence of the people of non-self-governing territories and peoples subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation.

Even if self-determination is deemed applicable only in a colonial context, the people of the British Southern Cameroons would still be entitled to exercise it; there is overwhelming evidence that the British Southern Cameroons is still a colonial territory, the Republic of Cameroun having taken over from Britain as the successor colonial authority.

Through a combination of fraud and force, the Republic of Cameroun annexed the British Southern Cameroons and is exercising colonial sovereignty over the territory. The United Nations/United Kingdom de-colonisation process in the British Southern Cameroons was incomplete. The British in their flight from the British Southern Cameroons never handed sovereign powers over the territory to its political leaders. Apparently, pursuant to a colonial deal between Britain and France, as Boothby wrote in a confidential letter dated 4 July 1961, to the Permanent Under-secretary, ‘We are anxious as the French that the Southern Cameroons should join the Cameroun Republic effectively on [1 October 1961] ... [T]he French may be right that we should not give Southern Cameroons authorities too much rein’ (Anyangwe 2010: 734–735). And in defiance of international law, the British, even on their own admission, simply transferred the British Southern Cameroons to a successor colonialist, the Republic of Cameroun.

The successor colonialist lost no time in adopting policies and taking measures aimed at the complete extinguishment of the identity of the people of the territory, the termination of even the self-government status it enjoyed under British colonial rule, the Balkanisation of the territory, and the detrimental change of the character of the territory and the way of life of its people. The people of the British Southern Cameroons are thus, in the words of Article 20(2) of the Charter, a colonised (and *ipso facto* an oppressed) people and consequently ‘have the right to free themselves from the bonds of domination by resorting to any means recognized by the international community’. The means include litigation, armed struggle and diplomatic intervention.

Even supposing that the British Southern Cameroons situation is not a colonial one, in spite of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, nevertheless, the principle of self-determination still applies. It is irrefutable that the Republic of Cameroun, a foreign state, is in occupation of the British Southern Cameroons and has imposed its suspect will, values, methods and system on the people. Its domination of the people of the Southern Cameroons is total: political, administrative, power relations, economic, social and cultural. The exploitation of the resources of the territory, especially oil, gas, gold and diamonds, is reckless and at an alarming rate, is essentially for the benefit of Republic of Cameroun, and is truly a case of spoliation of the territory's natural resources. Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961 speaks of the British Southern Cameroons having decided 'to achieve independence'. But there is nothing at all in the territory to suggest that it ever achieved independence.

The UN, Britain, and Republic of Cameroun itself, have not been able to lie that the Southern Cameroons enjoys even a modicum of independence. Colonial occupation by the Republic of Cameroun is manifest everywhere: annexation and spoliation of resources; the ubiquity of the military, gendarmerie, militarised police, and the imperious administrators of the Republic of Cameroun, all speaking and operating in French; the pervasiveness of Republic of Cameroun's symbols of statehood (flag, anthem, currency, name); and Republic of Cameroun's ruthless attack on the English language and administrative system, and the onslaught on the values, and the legal and educational systems of the British Southern Cameroons.

What is going on in the British Southern Cameroons is a grave attack on the humanity, the human dignity, the worth, the identity, the existence and the survival of the people of that country. Africa's political inter-governmental Organisation has repeatedly reaffirmed the solemn pledge to 'eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa', according to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, preamble paragraph 3. It has undertaken 'to eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism ... and all forms of discrimination' from Africa in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, preamble paragraph 8. Colonialism is a practice of domination which involves the subjugation of one people by another and the political and economic control of a dependent territory through various techniques. Colonialism is moreover an appalling human tragedy because of its abhorrent brutality, its magnitude, its organised nature and its negation of the existence of the colonised people. It has therefore earned universal opprobrium.

The Republic of Cameroun relentlessly pursues its institutionalised policy of massive and gross human rights abuses in the British Southern Cameroons. This is well-attested by cases such as *Gumne*, *Mukong*, *Dinka*, *Akwanga*, *Afusuong Njaru*, *Titiahongo*; by US State Department reports on the human rights situation in Cameroun, and by Republic of Cameroun's own human rights

monitoring body, the *Observatoire National des Droits de l'Homme* (ONDH), in for example the ONDH's 2008 to 2010 report – *Cameroun, Le Recul Continue*. The Republic of Cameroun has not ended its evil policy of oppression, repression, discrimination, arbitrary imprisonment (often under life-threatening conditions), extra-judicial killings, and terrorisation (especially through 'cordon and search operations', frequent indiscriminate politically-motivated arrests and the routine use of the military as a constabulary). The people of the British Southern Cameroons are thus indubitably an oppressed people and, in terms of Article 20(2), have the right to free themselves from the bonds of domination. Under international law, all peoples have the right to exist. They also have the right not to be dominated by another people. The inhabitants of the British Southern Cameroons are a people and have the right to exist as such. They have the right to be free from the domination of the people of Republic of Cameroun and, as a concomitant of that right, they have the right to resist colonial occupation and domination.

The Republic of Cameroun cannot set up the principle of territorial integrity against the legitimate entitlement of the people of the British Southern Cameroons to self-determination. As the ICJ pointed out in the Kosovo Case, the principle of territorial integrity is confined to the sphere of relations between states and cannot be implicated especially in a case of the exercise of the right of self-determination against colonial rule, oppression, or expansionism. By any characterisation, Republic of Cameroun is, in relation to the British Southern Cameroons, a foreign colonising state occupying the British Southern Cameroons. The assumption by Republic of Cameroun of jurisdiction over the British Southern Cameroons is, to say the least, very suspect and a mighty historical wrong. The sovereign powers it exercises over the territory could be nothing other than colonial sovereignty.

The only amount of territory, the integrity of which Republic of Cameroun can legitimately claim to be entitled to protect, is the territorial framework that devolved upon it as state successor to French Cameroun on the basis of the pre-existing boundaries as established by treaties and which it inherited on achievement of independence from France on 1 January 1960. That spatial configuration of the Republic of Cameroun does not, has never and will never include the territory of the British Southern Cameroons which, nearly two years after that country's independence, was still a Trust Territory under United Kingdom Administration. The principle of *uti possidetis* and the principle of respect for borders existing on the date of independence apply. Both principles operate as an estoppel. They bar the Republic of Cameroun from claiming legal entitlement, under any pretext whatsoever, to the territory of the British Southern Cameroons.

The occupation of the British Southern Cameroons by the Republic of Cameroun is an attempt to steal territory, initiated under the cover of cold war

darkness, by cashing in on an incomplete and messy UN/UK decolonisation process in the British Southern Cameroons. Similar attempts by Morocco and Indonesia to steal territory have failed because the international community is now much more vigilant. Republic of Cameroun, a former UN trust territory under French administration, emerged from colonial status into sovereign statehood and succeeded to title over French Cameroun by virtue of the principle of self-determination. There is no known principle of law or morality on which Republic of Cameroun can possibly base its bigotry that the British Southern Cameroons, which was also a UN trust territory, is inhabited by people of a lesser order and therefore not similarly entitled to emerge from colonial status into sovereign statehood by virtue of the selfsame principle of self-determination.

THE CASE FOR STATEHOOD

The annexation of the British Southern Cameroons by Republic of Cameroun is expansionist. It is territorial change brought about in breach of international law. In other words, it is territorial change in violation of (i) the territorial integrity of the British Southern Cameroons, (ii) the principle of *uti possidetis*, and (iii) the Constitutive Act of the African Union which, in Article 4 b, imposes on AU Member States, as did the 1964 OAU binding Resolution on Border Disputes, the legal obligation to respect the borders existing on the date each State achieved independence.

What the Republic of Cameroun has been trying to do these past 50 years, and which continues to be resisted by the people of the British Southern Cameroons, is to re-draw the map of this part of Africa by enlarging its territory from what it was on the date it achieved independence from France. When that country achieved independence from France on 1 January 1960 it succeeded, by operation of law, to the Anglo-French boundary treaties establishing the frontier between the British Cameroons and French Cameroun; it succeeded in effect to the boundary as established by those treaties.

It is not possible for the Republic of Cameroun to have acquired legal title to the British Southern Cameroons whether by cession, annexation or conquest. These are no longer valid modes of territorial acquisition in international law. The British Southern Cameroons was a UN trust territory and not a British possession. Britain could not therefore have validly transferred the territory to Republic of Cameroun. Britain's purported transfer of sovereignty to Republic of Cameroun was an egregious breach of its international obligation, ineffectual in law, and therefore of no moment.

The self-determination claim of the people of the British Southern Cameroons does not impinge in any way whatsoever on the territorial integrity of Republic of Cameroun. The borders of that State, as they ossified on the date of

its independence, are in no way impaired. The self-determination claim of the people of the British Southern Cameroons does not entail a change or an alteration of the very well delimited and demarcated frontier between the British Southern Cameroons and Republic of Cameroun as established by the Anglo-French boundary treaties, a frontier the Republic of Cameroun succeeded to on the date of its independence.

The interpretation the Republic of Cameroun puts on the plebiscite vote is that it automatically made the British Southern Cameroons a part of Republic of Cameroun. This interpretation is palpably erroneous, historically false and legally wrong. The plebiscite vote was a vote to 'join' (understood by both countries to mean to 'federate'), not a vote to be annexed. There was/is nothing the people of the British Southern Cameroons could possibly stand to gain by nonsensically voting to be annexed or absorbed by the French-speaking tyrannical, despotic and illiberal state of Republic of Cameroun. The Southern Cameroons could not by any stretch of the imagination have voted for a detrimental change in its political status and against its economic, social and cultural well-being. That would be totally against nature and the human instinct of dignity and self-preservation. There is no known case in history where a country voluntarily voted to become extinct and for its people to come under the domination and control of another people. That would be political suicide.

While the British Southern Cameroons voted to achieve independence it also expressed its willingness to enter into a limited form of federal political association with Republic of Cameroun. Federation involves a dovetailing rather than a supersession of legal orders; a cohabitation under the same roof but in different households. A vote to join is not the same thing as an act of joining. An expression of an intention to join does not mean actual joining. A promise or even an agreement to marry is not the marriage itself. Both parties must fulfil all the conditions for a valid marriage and go through the ceremony of marriage, which ends with the signing by both parties and their witnesses of the marriage certificate. The British Southern Cameroons and Republic of Cameroun never went through any ceremony of 'joining' attested by a treaty of union duly signed by the parties and deposited with the Secretariat of the UN as required by Article 102 of the UN Charter. Significantly, Republic of Cameroun, as earlier pointed out, was one of the countries that voted against UN Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961.

The grabbing of the British Southern Cameroons by the Republic of Cameroun following Britain's hurried departure is annexation and colonial occupation, not 'joining'. It may be likened to joint kidnapping and rape since it involved the forcible assumption of sovereignty over the territory and the violation of its territorial integrity. Even if the contemplated 'joining' had taken place, the people of the British Southern Cameroons would still be entitled to exercise the right to self-determination in the face of overwhelming evidence

of ongoing domination, oppression, persecution, massive and unremitting human rights abuse, and denial of self-government and of the right to exist as a people. Besides, on general principles, a right to contract in implies a right to contract out; a power of entry implies a power of exit; a power to opt in implies a power to opt out.

CONCLUSION

The British Southern Cameroons was previously a self-governing territory and a qualified subject of international law. In terms of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1608 (XV) of 21 April 1961 it achieved independence on 1 October 1961 in accordance with Article 76 b of the UN Charter. That self-governing status and that independence have been forcibly suppressed for over the past 50 years by the Republic of Cameroun. It follows that the British Southern Cameroons' claim to sovereign statehood boils down to reviving, restoring, giving effect to and protecting that self-government and independence lost as a result of colonial occupation by the Republic of Cameroun. To achieve this, it is permissible to resort to any means recognised by the international community and with its assistance

By pursuing its colonial project in the British Southern Cameroons, the Republic of Cameroun demonstrates its continuing lawlessness and defiance of international law. That utter contempt for international law will in the long run prove disastrous for that country and its people, as Hitler's expansionism finally proved disastrous for his country and people. Many countries have, without losing an inch of their rightful territory, withdrawn from territories they once illegally claimed and occupied: Israel from the Gaza Strip in Palestine, Indonesia from East Timor, Ethiopia from Eritrea, South Africa from Walvis Bay in Namibia, Nigeria from the Southern Cameroons territory of the Bakassi Peninsula, and Libya from the Aouzou Strip in Chad. It is also in the interest of Republic of Cameroun to rid itself of its delusions of grandeur and end forthwith its colonial occupation of the British Southern Cameroons.

* While some might still split hairs at the exact collectivity of people entitled to self-determination and the precise circumstances under which self-determination is claimable, it is settled international law that self-determination is now a human right and a norm of *jus cogens* available even in a postcolonial context. Examples of some insightful views suffice to make the point.

Rudolph C. Ryser recalls that self-determination is a right guaranteed under international law to all peoples seeking to freely choose their social, economic, political and

cultural future without external interference. He argues that the principle is unambiguous in its application to peoples having the collective right to freely choose their own future. He points out that the right to choose is what the US and other states like France, Britain and Canada seek to deny 'Fourth World' peoples. It is ironic, he writes, that these same countries that introduced concepts of self-determination, for example in President Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' as a way to preserve the peace and secure human rights and self-determination, have become active leaders in the drive to re-write international law denying self-determination of 'Fourth World' nations all around the world. Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein pointedly submits that self-determination encompasses the unilateral right to secession. He argues that there is no need to restrict the right and no need to fear the proliferation of new states, because no existing state has after all occupied its present borders for over 160 years, and that states have been, and are constantly being, created, changed or wiped off the surface of the earth. Indeed, keeping a people within borders not determined by them against their wishes, even though the state occupying those borders is itself independent, amounts conceivably to a new form of colonialism.

Rosalyn Higgins, former President of the ICJ, observes that self-determination is not just a procedural right invoked in the process of de-colonisation but is also a substantive continuing human right (the right of any colonised, oppressed, dominated or subjugated people to free themselves from that bondage) exercisable even within the postcolonial context. She points out, regarding the right to self-determination under common Article 1 of the ICCPR and ICESCP that 'many...African countries have accepted that self-determination... is an ongoing right, and is not limited to colonial peoples only ('Africa and the CCPR': 1993). Thompson Marsh argues that notions of state sovereignty and territorial integrity are antiquated and that self-determination can therefore be interpreted in a wider perspective to include the rights of minority groups to secede or form a separate state. He however cautions that claims to secession must only be considered as the last resort when it is clear that the ethnic groups cannot live together and it is equally clear that the group claiming secession makes a compelling case because of its perceived deprivation of human rights within the larger community. He hastens to add that such a group should establish its right to secede if it is deprived of its rights to participate in all value processes, power, wealth, and resources, respect and rectitude, enlightenment and skill, and affection and well-being. In his view, the proper context should also include potential impact of secession upon the parent state and other states, and security and stability in an international or regional context.

For Daniele Archbugi self-determination as a right has undergone change since the post-Cold War era as a right available even to non-colonised peoples. He points out that international and municipal law are insufficient in provisions dealing with this right. The result of this insufficiency, he says, is that the right is available even to reactionary groups. Lloyd Brown-John takes the view that whereas the right to self-determination exists as the right of a people to choose its own form of government, external self-determination expressed through secession is a right only available to groups experiencing

clear constitutional denial of political, linguistic, cultural and religious rights. He sees incorporation under federal states as the best solution for problems like this in respect for the principle of territorial integrity.

** Instruments reiterating invalidity of territorial changes and treaties obtained through coercion or other illegal means include: Charter of the United Nations, article 2(4); Charter of the Organization of American States, article 17; Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969, article 52; International Law Commission's 1945 Draft Declaration on the Rights and Duties of States, article 11; United Nations General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the United Nations Charter, 1970; United Nations General Assembly Definition of Aggression, 1974, article 5, paragraph 3.

A quest for belonging

Migration, identities and the politics of belonging in Africa

Joseph Mujere

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing body of historical and anthropological literature on the subject of migration and the politics of belonging in Africa. The literature covers subjects such as land, autochthony, rootedness, and citizenship. This chapter explores the interplay between migration and perceptions of belonging. Migration brings about the question of how both 'first comers' and 'late comers' construct belonging. In recent years, studies on the politics of belonging have focused on the nature of relationships between the so-called 'first comers' or autochthons and 'late comers' or strangers (see Geschiere and Jackson 2006; Geschiere 2009; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Geschiere 2005). These studies have revealed the often divisive and exclusionary nature of constructions of belonging. Notions of autochthony, in particular, have often been a powerful weapon in the hands of the political elites keen to remain in power by exploiting the division of people on autochthony-allogene basis. Yet belonging is not entirely about autochthony, or rootedness but it is also about how people use symbols and metaphors to claim rights to authority and resources. Using examples from Africa, this chapter examines the processes through which people construct, contest and articulate notions of belonging.

The chapter contends that belonging is a contested and multi-layered phenomenon making it possible for people to have multiple notions of belonging. The first section explores the interface between migration and the politics of belonging in Africa. Due to its increasing salience in the politics of belonging, autochthony is one of the main trajectories of belonging analysed. The second section analyses the importance of land and graves in the construction of belonging among many African communities. It argues that land, graves and funerals are central to the construction and articulation of notions of belonging in most African societies. The chapter ends by discussing politics of belonging in the Zimbabwean context and their transformation from the pre-colonial era through to the postcolonial era. It also examines the impact of the 2 000 farm occupations on the constructions of citizenship and national belonging.

MIGRATION, AUTOCHTHONY AND BELONGING

Africa has had a long history of population movement dating back to the pre-colonial era. In fact, migration was one of the most important processes in the formation of new polities in pre-colonial Africa. According to Kopytoff (1989: 7), 'Africa has been a "frontier continent" the stage for many population movements of many kinds and dimensions, ranging from such sub-continental proto-historical dispersions such as the Bantu or the Nilotes to the local movements preceding the colonial period.' These migrations played an important role in state formation in pre-colonial Africa. It is, thus, plausible to argue that Africa's history is a history of migrations (Adepoju 1995: 87). The main causes of migration in the pre-colonial era were ecological disasters such as droughts and epidemics, wars, trade and the search for new agricultural land (Adepoju 1995: 89). However, the nature and form of migrations have changed over time. With the introduction of the capitalist economy, 'the urban and industrial expansion of the colonial and post colonial eras gave rise to migrations to towns, mines, and plantations, and, in the process, to a continuing reorganisation of ethnic identities' says Kopytoff (1989:7).

Studies on migrations in Africa have mostly focused on labour migrations especially in the colonial period. However, recently more attention has been paid to the link between migration, identity and belonging (see Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). This shift has largely been influenced by the 1990s democratisation process in most African states which fuelled the desire among political elites to use autochthony as a political tool to exclude political opponents. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (1998: 1) assert that, 'democratisation seems to engender fierce and often violent struggles over who "really" belongs and who is a stranger.'

This has led migration analysis to revolve around the impact of migration on identities, citizenship, and belonging and also the relationship between migrants and locals. This relationship has been marked by contested definitions of the 'first comers' and 'late comers', which have sometimes resulted in xenophobic violence. In Cameroon, political liberalisation induced a general fear among autochthons of being outvoted by the numerically superior immigrants as voting became more important with the dawn of multiparty democracy. According to Konings (2001: 170), 'with the introduction of multi-partyism, the ruling party and government often fear being outvoted during local and regional elections by "strangers" who tend to support the opposition for the representation and defence of their interests'.

The exclusion of those viewed as strangers, especially in West Africa, in some cases resulted in the crafting of citizenship laws which are designed to exclude and delegitimise those people labelled outsiders. In Ivory Coast and Cameroon sitting governments have sought to narrow definitions of citizenship in order to exclude their political opponents. For example, reveals Geschiere in Ivory Coast

President Laurent Gbagbo's National Operation of Identification it stipulated that, 'every Ivorian had to go back to his or her "village of origin" in order to be "identified" there. Only after such an identification could a person be registered as a full citizen of the country and claim full citizen's right – notably rights to own land and to vote' (Geschiere 2009: 98). This was, as Geschiere and Jackson argue, 'a tragic example of the violent extremes to which *autochthinité* can be stretched'. The ruling elites benefited from this situation since the strained relations between autochthons and migrants encouraged the perpetuation of the political status quo.

Similarly, Cameroon has also pursued policies of citizenship which mirror those of Gbagbo's Ivory Coast. In Cameroon President Paul Biya has had an obsession with autochthony and belonging similar to that of Gbagbo in Ivory Coast. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh argue that Cameroon's fixation with autochthony owes much to democratisation and the increased importance of votes which made President Biya seek to remain in power by using divisive policies which saw the segregation between the so-called autochthons and allochthons being overplayed. The issue of autochthony and belonging in Cameroon has also affected immigrants' access to land and even where people are buried when they die. In fact funerals and burial places are viewed as pointers of where one actually belongs (Geschiere 2005: 47). Demonstrating against the Bamileke, immigrants are viewed as strangers in Douala the Sawa argued that, 'if Bamileke immigrants in the city insist on burying their deceased in the village, then it is clear that they belong there. So they should go home and vote there, rather than in the land of their hosts' (Geschiere 2009: 190).

Hence death and funeral rituals have assumed a great role in discourses of belonging as burial places are often associated with where one 'really belongs'. As Konings (2001:188) puts it, 'the autochthony-allochthony discourse has not only become an important ploy for political entrepreneurs in their struggles for power. It appears also to have become part and parcel of the people's daily lives in south west Province [of Cameroon]'. As a result of this, immigrants who are often more numerous than those who consider themselves first comers are viewed as a threat as they are perceived to have homes elsewhere where they actually belong.

In spite of its currency in Africa in the recent years, it is apparent that just like many other identities, autochthony is largely a social construct that is being manipulated by political elites for their own benefit. Just like ethnicity, autochthony has created artificial boundaries and fanned notions of exclusion and caused the entrenchment of the 'Us and Them' dichotomy. According to Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2000: 425) ethnicity and autochthony, 'are equally capable of arousing strong emotions regarding the defence of home and ancestral lands, but since their substance is not named they are both more elusive and more easily subject to political manipulation'.

Leonhardt (2006: 70) contends that, 'autochthony is not a coherent body of principles on which rights are based. It is a mystification of ancestry, a method used for the purposes of magically extracting wealth from the state.' It is based on the often contestable claim of being the first comers and being the sons and daughters of the soil and opposed to strangers, aliens or late comers. Political elites thus use autochthony and narrow citizenship policies for political expedience. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2000: 425) analyse the tensions between the Beti and Bamileke in the city of Yaoundé in Cameroon. The Beti consider themselves as the autochthons while viewing the Bamileke as outsiders. This divide is often played out on the political arena with regards to who is eligible to stand election in Yaoundé and often leads to violent clashes.

It is all the more striking that in spite of it being seemingly embedded or primordial, autochthony is a very fluid form of identity. This makes the process of defining who is an autochthon and who is a stranger a very difficult task. Since identities are fluid, claims to autochthony are often met with counter claims. In the end autochthony is by no means cast in stone as 'strangers' can also claim autochthony thereby turning the former autochthons into strangers. It is in this light that Geschiere and Jackson (2006: 1) argue that, 'belonging turns out to be always relative: there is always the danger of being unmasked as "not really" belonging, or even of being a "fake" autochthon'. Hence autochthony and belonging are contested and negotiated notions which are open to various interpretations and reinterpretations.

The autochthon-allochthon dialectic is also played on conflicts over control of natural resources such as land. Lentz (2007: 37) argues that land and land rights play an important role in the politics of belonging in Africa due to the fact that rights to land 'are intimately tied to membership in specific communities.' Scarcity of land has also increased the need to identify those who 'really belong' to the area and those who are late comers and therefore have limited rights to the land. Control over land therefore becomes a sign of the extent to which one belongs (Lentz 2006:1).

In contrast, in the pre-colonial era though, the first comer and late comer relationship also involved issues to do with control over land – the divide between autochthons and allochthons was not rigid. It is the scramble for resources and political manipulations which have led to the crystallisation of the divisions between autochthons and allochthons and the crippling of former processes through which immigrants could be integrated into the society and enjoy the same rights as the autochthons.

Using the case of the Anglophone region of Cameroon, Konings (2001: 117) argues that, land was not the only reason for the development of antagonistic relations between autochthons and strangers. The latecomers' success in agriculture, trade and other entrepreneurial activities also contributed to the strained relations as the autochthons became jealous of the success of the immigrants.

Politicians exploited these localised strained relations to further their own agendas of entrenching themselves. According to Lentz (2007: 47), 'in many cases, it is young men who invoke powerful discourses on autochthony, much more so than their fathers, who continue to insist that well-intentioned strangers should not be refused land if they need it for subsistence.' This is often a result of petty jealousies over the success of the immigrants and also competition over resources.

Autochthony has also been a very powerful weapon that a number of politicians have wielded against their political opponents. This has often seen political leaders hastily crafting amendments to constitutions to include very narrow definitions of citizenship often aimed at excluding a political opponent. In Ivory Coast Laurent Gbagbo and his predecessors systematically labelled the opposition leader, Quattara, a foreigner because his parents came from Burkina Faso (Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005: 395).

Autochthony is also closely linked with the concept of rootedness. This entails an attachment to place, being an indigene or having roots in a certain place as opposed to being a stranger. Malkki (1992) however, suggests that the idea of being rooted needs to be revised as it fails to appreciate the people's ability to construct new notions of belonging when they get 'uprooted' or migrate. She argues that, 'there has emerged a new awareness of the global social fact that, now more than perhaps ever before, people are chronically mobile and routinely displaced, and invent homes and homelands in the absence of territorial, national bases-not in situ, but through memories of, and claims on, places that they can or will no longer corporeally inhabit' (Malkki 1992:24). This captures the need for academics to escape the pitfalls of attaching people to place and nations to territory.

Using the case of Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Malkki examines the impact of displacement on people's construction of identity. She examines two groups of Hutu refugees who fled the 1972 selective genocide in Burundi. One group settled in an organised refugee camp and the other group in an unorganised setting close to urban areas. She discovered that because of the conditions in the refugee camps, the Hutu in the camps developed a stronger notion of Hutu identity and harboured a desire to return to Burundi one day (Malkki 1992). On the contrary those who were not living in the camps integrated more into the Tanzanian community leading to the development of mutual mistrust between these two groups. Their different circumstances strongly impacted upon the development of these different notions of belonging and idea of Hutu identity.

As Malkki (1992: 4) puts it, 'identifying themselves as a people in exile, the camp refugees responded to their own displacement from the national order by creating another nation. The town refugees' response to displacement was radically different and in the end more subversive: they dissolved national categories in the course of everyday life and produced more cosmopolitan forms of

identity instead.' Thus though places of birth could play a part in the construction of belonging, they are definitely not the only variables that matter.

According to Malkki (1992: 34), 'to plot only "places of birth" and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imagining them.' Thus being rooted, autochthonous or indigenous are all notions which need to be re-examined and problematised in a bid to understand the politics of belonging. These notions have the effect of making place and being the first comer the most important – if not only – variable in the construction of belonging. Belonging thus should not be reduced to 'rootedness' or autochthony. It is a multilayered and multidimensional phenomenon. Though indeed the link between identity and territory cannot be ignored, there is a need to seriously consider how up-rooted or de-territorialised people construct belonging.

It is apparent that as a category of belonging, autochthony is a highly contested phenomenon. It is this characteristic of autochthony which makes it very susceptible to different interpretations and reinterpretations such that no one can really safely say that they are the 'real autochthons'. This malleable nature of autochthony leads to its often violent manifestations as often claims to autochthony are met with counter claims or result in the violent displacement of the perceived strangers. Practically, anyone can claim autochthony and by the same token anyone can be unmasked as a fake autochthon.

A landscape approach can be of great value in analysing migrations and politics of belonging as landscape is a vital component in people's construction of belonging. The way in which people relate to the landscape and how they locate themselves within it is quite pertinent in their construction of belonging. As people migrate they often leave 'bits of themselves' engraved on the landscapes hence creating multiple belongings. However, apart from landscape being an idea or a social construction it is also about people's actions, not just their thoughts. In other words, it is about practise. Repetition or routine plays an important role in people's development of a sense of belonging. The essence of belonging lies in the repetition of certain activities which people ultimately identify as core routines. It is these routines in certain places that lead to the development of geographies of home (Terklenli 1995: 325).

According to Terkenli (1995: 326), 'these patterns (routines) become part of home because they represent recurrent, familiar points of reference in time, space and society. Repetition is an essential element in the transformation of place into home'. Bender (2001:4) asserts that 'by moving along familiar paths, winding memories and stories around places, people create a sense of self and belonging'. Belonging therefore involves not only being in a place that one is a local or insider but also includes one's relationship with the community and the landscape. In this light, belonging is about the production of locality. Appadurai (1996: 179) argues that ceremonies of naming and tonsure, scari-

fication and circumcision are some of the social processes that create locality onto bodies. He adds that, 'such rites are not simply mechanical techniques for social segregation but social techniques for the production of natives' (Appadurai 1996: 179).

Belonging can, however, transcend social construction to include people's physical relationship with the landscape and with materials. Hence, though belonging is a social construct the materiality of objects and landscape also matters. The concept of materiality has recently gained currency in anthropology and other disciplines (see Miller 2005). According to Fontein (2008: 751), 'central to this trend is a renewed interest in the political implications of the materiality of objects, landscape and nature'. This concept tries to bridge the gap between environmental determinism and postmodern deconstruction and to span the nature-culture divide. It is premised on the argument that, 'once deconstruction has reached its limits, we are inevitably still left with material substance whose presence is politically salient in complex ways' (Fontein 2008: 751).

Tim Ingold (1993: 151) calls for a mutual relationship between the people and the environment and argues against, 'the sterile opposition between the naturalistic view of the landscape as a neutral, external backdrop of human activities, and the culturalistic view that every landscape is a particular cognitive or symbolic ordering of space'. To him people's physical relationship with the environment precedes social constructions. His discussion of affordances puts into perspective the 'enabling' qualities of materials. According to Ingold (1993: 155), 'a place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience'. It can thus be argued that physical things have aspects that either enable or impede people's actions. In the case of belonging, it can be argued that the material qualities of the landscape can enable or constrain a community's constructions of belonging. As has been highlighted above, belonging is constructed through repetition or practise which entails a relationship between humans and physical matters.

LAND, GRAVES AND BELONGING

Belonging is also closely linked to the idea of home. Home can be defined in a number of ways and it means different things to different people. According to Sopher (1979: 130), 'home can refer with equal ease to house, land, village, city, district, country or indeed the world'. Terkenli (1995: 328) asserts that, though home can be defined geographically as a spatial context and also on the basis of the home and non-home dichotomy, it is not only a spatial phenomenon but also includes social and habitual conditions. In this home

and non-home dialectic the further a person is from home the better he or she appreciates it and the more nostalgic they become. There is always a special yearning for home when one travels, no matter how difficult life could have been at home. In this rather spatial definition, home seems to have more meaning when one migrates, yet it also assumes new meanings on each return. In essence home is better appreciated when it is juxtaposed with what Yi Fu Tuan, quoted in Sopher (1979: 133) calls 'journey'. As Marchetti-Mercer (2006: 203) puts it, 'in order to truly find "home", one may sometimes be forced to leave it'. Migration is thus an important stage in the process of appreciating one's belonging.

But is home about space or about people? Giamatti quoted in Marchetti-Mercer (2006: 192) uses a definition that is less location based and asserts that, 'home is a concept, not a place; it is state of mind where self-definition starts. It is origins, the mix of time and place and smell and weather wherein one first realises one is an original, perhaps like others, especially those one loves'. Similarly, Sopher (1979: 136) argues that the primary content of 'home' is not material landscape but people. African spaces can therefore be argued to be largely social spaces which derive meaning from the people who occupy them (Krokfors 1995: 7). Belonging therefore involves not only being in a place that one is familiar with, but also includes one's relations with the people in the community and also with the landscape.

In spite of its many and varied definitions and conceptualisations it is clear that, 'the search for a place we can call home and where we can truly belong is a common human experience' (Marchetti-Mercer 2006: 191). The concept of home therefore has great bearing on the extent to which immigrants belong. Migration tends to put a high premium on migrants to search for a place they can call home and have a sense of belonging. In her recent article on what she calls 'new meanings of home' in post apartheid South Africa, Maria Marchetti-Mercer (2006) provides a case of how as a trajectory of belonging to a 'home' can mean different things to different people in the same country. She argues that the different notions of home among South Africans influence their experience of belonging in the post apartheid South Africa. Some South Africans who felt at 'home' in the apartheid era found it quite difficult to really belong in the post apartheid South Africa and ended up leaving the country.

According to Marchetti-Mercer (2006: 208), 'many people no longer feel safe in the new South Africa and are choosing to leave'. Yet those who were returning from exile also found it quite difficult to belong to a country which they had spent so many years away from. The place they once called home had changed and had become as strange to them due to their long stay in exile.

Perhaps more than anything else, funerals and graves put into perspective the politics of belonging in many African societies. There is always a tendency among many African communities to want to bury their dead in their home

villages. Most Africans desire to be buried 'at home' when they die, even if they have spent their lives in towns or elsewhere. Others are forced by tradition to be buried at family cemeteries. As a result of this, being buried in a town or elsewhere where one's ancestor bones are not buried carries a lot of stigma. According to Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2000: 435) many Cameroonians consider burial locations to be a very important criterion for belonging. In essence, the basic test for one's belonging will be to ask them to show where their ancestors are buried. Failure to do so would be interpreted as meaning that the person belongs elsewhere, in this case where the bones of his other ancestors are interred.

Samuel Eboua, a leader of the *Mouvement pour Democratie* in Cameroon is quoted to have said, 'every Cameroonian is an allogene anywhere else in the country ... apart from where his ancestors lived and where his mortal remains will be buried ...' (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000: 434). Although such a definition of belonging borders on the extreme side of autochthony, it helps to explain the extent to which ancestral graves can be used as a determinant of one's belonging. In his recent publication, Chabal asserts that burials reinforce a collective sense of belonging and strengthens an individual's attachment to the community. As he argues, 'the link to the ancestors, wherever they are buried, is an integral part of the meaning of origin, and of the texture of identity, which cannot be disregarded' (Chabal 2009: 29). Belonging is thus linked with attachment to a physical place which draws its meaning from people's attachments with the ancestral graves. Yet this need not suggest that place is the only variable in the belonging matrix. It is just but one of the many variables in complex assemblages of ethnicity, kinship, religion and language.

Even in the case of rural-urban migrants there is almost always an obligation to go back 'home' to attend funerals. Tradition also often dictates that even if one considers himself an urbanite, they are still supposed to have their remains buried at the ancestral burial grounds with all funeral rituals being performed. Smith (2006: 569) observed that among the Igbo in Nigeria, rural-urban migrants 'face powerful expectations to be buried at home in their ancestral villages and perform elaborate and expensive funeral ceremonies for their dead relatives.'⁸ The value of this is basically the maintenance of migrants' ties with their rural homes of which each funeral they attend is a reminder of where they belong. This also means those urban migrants in the end have dual or multiple notions of belonging.

Cohen and Odhiambo's (1992) ethnographic study of the conflicts surrounding the burial of SM, a prominent Luo Kenyan lawyer illustrate the extent to which people can go to prove where one really belongs. The conflict between his widow a Kikuyu, and his Luo kinsmen over who had the right to bury SM became a test of SM's belonging. His widow desired to bury him on his farm close to Nairobi while his Luo kinsmen wanted him to be buried in his

home village among the Luo in spite of him having spent the better part of his life in Nairobi. The case dragged on in the courts for six months until the high court declared that the deceased's Luo community had the rights to bury him. It was indeed a contestation of where SM actually belonged and also whether one could truly belong to an urban area, away from his kinsmen. Graves can therefore be markers of where 'some-body' or 'bodies' belong(s).

Parker Shipton's (2009) ethnographic study of the Luo people in Kenya provides an interesting contribution to the debates on the interplay between land and the politics of belonging in Africa. The main focus of this volume is land, credit, indebtedness, and belonging in Africa. The book provides an intriguing story of African peoples' attachment to land and the threats of dispossession brought about by the introduction of freehold tenure and mortgaging. The author uses the case of the Luo in Kenya to show that ideologies about land and attachment have often clashed with governments' policies aimed at titling land and making it possible to use it as collateral in applying for agricultural loans. It is this Western model of land tenure and credit which Shipton sees as threatening the Luo people's attachment to their ancestral lands and the future of their belonging.

Of particular importance is the debate on the applicability of the concept of freehold tenure in Africa and whether land can be bought or pledged as collateral for a loan and consequently forfeited if the debtor defaults. Shipton concludes, quite rightly, that the freehold-mortgage system of credit does not suit the Kenyan people and arguably many other rural African communities whose tenure is communal. As he puts it, the mortgage, 'threatens to separate people in rural areas from home, from kith and kin, and from ancestral graves, with all that these mean' (Shipton 2009: ix). Shipton demonstrates that the nature of Africans' attachment to land renders it quite impossible to mortgage or to sell. Land, old homes and ancestral graves are often viewed as inalienable heritage that cannot be sold. As Shipton (2009: 20) argues, 'graves are the symbolic focal points of human attachments to place: the living and dead, the social and the material, all connect here.' Similarly, communities in the Southern Highlands of Madagascar land and tombs are central to their construction of a sense of belonging.

According to Evers, in rural Madagascar 'the *tempon-tany* (masters of the land)' controls access and management of land. They generally do not register their land claims. Tombs are deemed to constitute sufficient evidence of ownership, 'since the Malagasy believe tombs are geographical markers of family origin in a particular region' (Evers 2004: 223–224). As a result of such notions about tombs and attachment to land, it was difficult for the government of President Ravalomanana to introduce a new system of land registration as the *tempon-tany* saw it as a usurpation of their power to distribute land and a threat to their attachment to their land. Such efforts were also perceived as

an attempt to 'bring the state into an area that is deemed to be the exclusive realm of the ancestors, who are widely believed to be the ultimate owners of land' (Evers 2004: 224). Graves thus help to connect people to the land and to their heritage. They are an integral part of people's attachment to land, to the community and indeed a reference point to their belonging.

In *Waiting for the Rain*, a novel by Charles Mungoshi, Lucifer had this to say in a soliloquy about his dissatisfaction with 'home' and his burning desire to leave it:

I am Lucifer Mandengu. I was born here against my will. I should have been born elsewhere – of some other parents. I have never liked it here, and I never shall and if ever I will leave this place, I am not going to come back. It is the failure's junk heap. Those who go to towns only come back to die. *'Home' is where you come back to die, having lived all your life elsewhere (my emphasis)*. Home is a cluster of termite-eaten huts clinging on the stony slope of a sun-baked hill. (Mungoshi 1975: 162).

This shows the multilayered and ambivalent nature of belonging. At one level, belonging is about one's attachment to a place and their love for it and at another level it is about an attachment to a place that one is keen to leave because it is associated with unpleasant things. In fact some people even loathe their homes due to issues like poverty, droughts and other problems though they still see it as their final resting place. To Lucifer Mandengu, home was associated with bad experiences which prompted his desire to leave it and stay in an area where he was a stranger; only to come back to die. This is in contrast to the idea of home as a place associated with nostalgia and everything good that anyone would long to go back to.

Poverty, droughts and general state of impoverishment of Lucifer Mandengu's home where he had a sense of belonging made him hate it and wish to be somewhere else. He therefore sees no reason why he should cling on to a home which could no longer provide him with the comforts associated with home. To quote again from Lucifer Mandengu's soliloquy, 'must I live with what I no longer believe in? Because I have been born here and here is home where everyone is and the roots of the family are-is that the only reason why I must come back to die in this desert?' (Mungoshi 1975: 162). Hence home is not only where one has a sense of belonging but also where they want to be buried when they die; a final resting place.

In his study of Israeli and Japanese immigrants in Canada, Magat (1999: 122) discovered that there were some Israelis in Canada who desired to be buried in Israel, even though it was a place they had never lived; it was because they considered Israel to be their real home.

Apart from or often related to autochthony in complex ways, religion is another aspect of belonging. It has the effect of bringing people together and making them feel they belong to a community of believers, differentiating them from others with different religious beliefs. As Geschiere (2009: 2) argues, religious belonging is becoming as important as autochthony. For example Islam as a religion and a way of life engenders new notions of belonging for its converts. For many Muslims in North Cameroon, commitment to the village is not always evident as the village is associated with non-believers or infidels. The newly converted Muslims join a community of Muslims and begin to view the non-Muslims in the villages as infidels and stop participating in the traditional ceremonies religion (van Santen 1998: 403). According to van Santen (1998: 407), in the case of the Mafa in North Cameroon 'as soon as converts have "started to pray" they change their name, dress in a different way, adopt another language, take on other praying habits, and practice other marriage rituals and bride price exchanges, follow other economic occupations and new inheritance system.' In other words the converts assume a new identity upon their conversion, with its own set of notions of belonging. The new converts to Islam begin to belong to the Muslim community and have very minimal ties with their home villages.

POLITICS OF BELONGING IN ZIMBABWE

As in many African societies, belonging in Zimbabwe, especially among the Shona, from the pre-colonial period, has often been about attachments to land and relationships between individuals and communities. It has also been about attachment to ancestral lands, graves and old homes (*matongo*). However, because of the abundance of land in the pre-colonial era communities had mechanisms through which strangers could be integrated into the community and gradually become insiders. The Kopytoffian model of state formation in Africa helps to explain migration and politics of belonging in the pre-colonial era.

Kopytoff (1989) argues that migration was one of the important factors that contributed to state formation in pre-colonial Africa. New polities were often a result of split from an older state due to a number of reasons which could range from civil wars to famines. At the first stage of the formation of the new polity adherents would largely be kinsmen. Kopytoff (1989) asserts that, since power on the frontier lay largely in numbers, this meant that attracting and retaining adherents and dependants was encouraged; initially, this was done by resorting to a kin-group model of integration.

However, as the emergent polity grew in size, 'the kin group model for recruiting adherents became increasingly impractical. In this second stage, the polity moved from a corporate kin-group model of integration to one emphasising

ing the inter-dependence between rulers and subjects though the founding kin continued to wield power' (Kopytoff 1989). Though authority was legitimised by being the first comer the dominance of the immigrants would mean that they became rulers of the new polity while the conquered autochthons would remain the guardians of land and would lead rainmaking and other fertility rituals.

The colonial period brought about new challenges for Africans who often had to work as labour migrants in towns and mines. Just like in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Zimbabwean colonial cities were a cultural melting pot with a mixture of Africans from different cultural backgrounds working as labour migrants. Labour migrants from countries such as Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Mozambique constituted a high number of labour migrants in Rhodesian towns. Ethnicity was one of the major unifying forces migrants relied on in the towns.

Ethnic and regional connections were often used to secure jobs, get accommodation or assistance in times of bereavement (Yoshikuni 1989). From as early as 1918, mutual aid associations were a major rallying point for migrants. Most of the mutual aid associations were formed to help members to cope with bereavement, secure jobs and also have a sense of belonging. Though some of the associations tried to be inclusive the majority were either based on ethnicity or region where the members migrated from. According to Manganga (2003), following the problems many Africans faced in coping with deaths due to 1918 influenza epidemic, burial societies became a common phenomenon in towns such as Salisbury and Bulawayo and also in mining areas. As Manganga (2003: 58) argues, 'the main concern of the mutual aid associations was to help members meet funeral expenses, aiding destitute members and paying fines for members convicted of petty crimes'.

Burial societies such as Tete Burial Society, formed by migrants from the Tete Province in Mozambique, and the Northern Rhodesia Burial Society, formed by immigrants from Northern Rhodesia, were a common feature in towns. Other groupings were social clubs such as dance societies and secret societies such as the Nyao and *Gule Wamkulu* common among migrant workers from Nyasaland. All these groupings helped to network migrants and give them a sense of belonging in towns and mines. The flip side of the unity and sense of belonging which these social groupings created was the antagonism and ethnic prejudice created among migrants from different countries and different ethnicities. For example a fight between two people belonging to different ethnic groups or belonging to different social groupings would at times lead to conflict between the two groups involved. Hence the inclusion fostered by these groupings also bred strong notions of exclusion and prejudice against those considered outsiders.

In *Are We Not Also Men*, Ranger (1995) uses the case the Samkange family to explore the development of African nationalism and the influence of Christianity in Zimbabwe. The book focuses on Thompson Samkange and his

family, especially his sons Stanlake and Sketchly. Among other things he shows the impact that Thompson's work in the Methodist church had on his political career. The study also shows how Tambaram, the Samkange family farm in the Msengezi Purchase Area, was important in the development of a Samkange family dynasty and their belonging to an emergent African Middle Class.

According to Ranger (1995: vii) the farm was one of the first to be purchased in the Msengezi Purchase Areas in the 1930s and at that time, 'its acquisition had been a landmark in the establishment of an elite family'. With time, like many other Purchase Area farms, Tambaram became more or a less a family burial ground and a place where all the family members would return to bury their relatives or for other family gatherings. As a result the Samkanges affectionately refer to the family burial ground on the farm as the 'Samkange Heroes Acre' (Ranger 1995: vii). Such attachment to family farms was replicated in many other Purchase Area farms in the country at different scales.

In essence Purchase Areas created a new sense of belonging for the farm owners. Apart from being status symbols, the farms became focal points for the different families, leading to the creation of family dynasties on the farms. Basotho in the Dewure Purchase Areas however went a step further by purchasing a communal farm which also became more or less a 'Basotho Heroes acre' and a focal point of their belonging. The cemetery on the Basotho communal farm developed to become a place loaded with meaning and a symbol for Basotho belonging in an area dominated by the Shona autochthons.

The 1920s and 1930s saw the emergence of African Independent Churches. These included a 'wide range of prophetic groups, varying from semi-Messianic to simple Zionist or Apostolic Churches (Daneel 1971: 285)'. The differences in leadership and doctrines of these African Independent Churches created a new form of belonging for the church members. Similarly, Pentecostal churches, the earliest in Zimbabwe being the Apostolic Faith Church introduced in Rhodesia in 1918, also brought a new trajectory to religious belonging (Daneel 1971: 286).

Pentecostalism introduced a new form of belonging, whose main basis is 'being born again' and being able to speak in tongues. As has already been highlighted, the trajectory of belonging offered by Pentecostalism places emphasis on accumulation and belonging to a community of believers while 'Othering' those who are not 'born again'. Maxwell's historical study of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God (ZAOGA), arguably the biggest Pentecostal church in Zimbabwe and the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) provides an interesting analysis of the development of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe and the sense of belonging it gives the new converts (Maxwell 2006).

According to Maxwell (2006: 201), the new converts, having been born again, 'become smart in appearance, hard-working and literate, hence employable'. This feeds into the gospel of prosperity which is at the centre of

Pentecostalism. Apart from tracing the development of ZAOGA and its development into a transnational movement, he also analyses the position of Ezekiel Guti, the church's founder, and how he has managed to deal with internal schisms and managed to turn himself into a cult figure in the church. It is quite apparent the doctrine espoused by Pentecostal movements such as Ezekiel Guti's ZAOGA bring in new forms of religious belonging and set apart its converts from other Christians.

Spierenburg's work on migrations and land reforms in Zimbabwe examines the conflicts over land between autochthons and strangers (*vatorwa*) which emerged as a result of the government initiated and donor funded Mid Zambezi Rural Development Project in the Dande communal areas (Spierenburg 2004). The aim of the project was to redistribute land and ensure increased production. Spierenburg also examines Dande people's resistance to the government land reforms of the 1980s and 1990s and the role of the *Mhondoro* spirits (mediums of royal ancestral spirits) in the allocation of land and integration of the migrants in their spirit province.

The *Mhondoro* spirits were on the forefront in expressing discontent with the land reforms. The mediums claimed that traditionally land belonged to the royal *Mhondoro* spirits and before any strangers could be allowed to settle they had to be presented to the *Mhondoro* spirit mediums. The *Mhondoro* would then perform the rituals of accepting the immigrants and integrating them into the community. The *Mhondoro* would also make sure that the newcomers did not break the taboos and other laws of the area. The owners of the land were thus the *Mhondoro* spirits whose medium had the power of allocating it, a role which was now being usurped by the government technocrats imposing land reform. The land shortages generated by this land reform project led to conflicts between the autochthons and the migrants as the former saw the migrants as benefiting from the project at their expense. When the government officials demarcated land it was the migrants who benefited more since the autochthons largely cultivated off the banks of streams and river, areas which the project converted into grazing areas, while the migrants occupied land further away from the rivers. This did not go down well with the autochthons who viewed the migrants as stealing their land.

These conflicts often spilled into witchcraft accusations or threats of use of witchcraft as the autochthons were left disgruntled with the strangers being allocated more land. According to Spierenburg (2004: 213), although migration has always been an important feature of life in Dande as illustrated by the fact that the *Mhondoro* cult includes migrants, 'recently, with increased pressure on the land, the flexibility in attitude towards the latest migrants has lessened'. With the involvement of government technocrats in the settlement of migrants in Dande, the old procedures which would lead to the integration of the newcomers into the spirit province of the *Mhondoro* were ignored – much to the

chagrin of the autochthons. Many people in Dande thus saw the process of land reform as disturbing the status quo, leading to the settlement of immigrants without the involvement of the *Mhondoro spirits*. In the end, integration and inclusion began to be replaced by exclusion and mistrust engendered by conflicts over land.

The post-2000 period saw more and more people who hitherto saw themselves as belonging to Zimbabwe, having their citizenship and indeed their belonging questioned by the political elites. For example the violent land occupations, Third Chimurenga, in 2000 saw the status of white commercial farmers and their workers who were mostly Zimbabweans of foreign descent being questioned. This was done in a bid to justify displacement of the white farmers and their workers from the farms. The white farmers and farm workers who since the country's attainment of independence had viewed themselves as belonging to the nation, began to have their citizenship and their belonging challenged leading to their violent displacement.

The situation in post 2000 Zimbabwe has thus brought new challenges for white farmers. By the same token Zimbabweans of Malawian, Mozambican and Zambian origin, together with other migrants have had to negotiate their belonging amidst Zimbabwe's political crisis. The former migrant farm workers have had to migrate to towns to eke out a living as their source of livelihood was destroyed by the farm invasions. Zimbabwe's land reform thus saw the emergence of new paradigms of inclusion and exclusion based on support of Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and its land reform programme (Derman and Hellum 2007: 161). This new discourse has sought to push the argument that land belongs to 'indigenous Zimbabweans' which led to the violent displacement of white farmers and their workers being perceived as belonging elsewhere. Thus after 2000, white farmers began to be challenged as they were perceived as outsiders who had to give back land to 'indigenous Zimbabweans'.

The political elites in Zimbabwe have tried to link belonging to being an indigene or *mwana wevhu* (son of the soil) whose main basis is having a rural home or being rooted in a particular community. The implicit assumption among the political elite in Zimbabwe is that the ultimate sign of belonging is having a rural home, which by extension meant that whoever did not have a rural home did not really belong. This was recently tragically witnessed when the government launched its urban slum clearing exercise code-named Operation *Murambatsvina* or Restore Order, in which so-called illegal vending stalls, backyard structures and illegal-extensions were destroyed (Tibaijuka 2005). Government officials unequivocally stated that those people whose shelter and livelihoods were destroyed should return to their rural homes.

The use of the phrase 'return home' was itself loaded with notions of exclusion, as it was clear that many would have nowhere to return to because

they simply did not have rural homes to return to. As Bracking (2008: 2) puts it, those internally displaced people with Zimbabwean identity cards were returned to their rural areas and those without, or of foreign origin were 'initially taken to fenced holding camps and stored like beasts'. People of foreign descent continued to be adversely affected by the government policies, which showed little regard for their rights as Zimbabwean citizens. The displacement of the urbanites in the wake of Operation *Murambatsvina* reveals the extent to which citizenship had been narrowed and redefined (Bracking 2008: 4).

However, Members of Parliament belonging to ZANU PF defended the operation with some of its members such as Aeneas Chigwedere boldly stating that there is 'nobody in Zimbabwe who does not have a rural home' (Zimbabwe Human Rights Watch, 2005: 13). This resonated with Ivory Coast's National Operation of Identification where people were asked to go to their original villages to be registered. The director of this National Operation of Identification programme is quoted to have argued that, 'someone unable to show his belonging to a specific village must be a person without bearings and so dangerous that we must ask him where he comes from' (Geschiere 2009: 98). Hence for the political elites every citizen had to have a village where their roots are supposed to be.

By dwelling so much on autochthony, scholars have tended to skirt the problem of whites belonging in Africa. As a group who find it difficult or almost impossible to claim autochthony in Africa, they have had greater challenges in their quests for belonging. Hughes (2010) argues that White settlers in Africa in general and in settler states like Zimbabwe in particular, have faced the challenges of constructing their belonging in an environment which is a marked difference from the glaciated climates of Europe.

Faced with the arid environments and the expanses of the Savanna, white settlers' belonging project focused on re-imagining these new environments, remodelling them through dam construction and creation of waterscapes, eco-tourism and also re-imagination of the land through paintings, and writing of books and novels. Hughes (2010) argues that the project may have failed because it was based on exclusion as white settlers never attempted to integrate into the local community. The post-2000 farm occupation brought the reality of white belonging to the fore. While Zimbabweans of Malawian, Mozambican and Zambian origin have faced a number of challenges in their construction and negotiation of belonging, white Zimbabweans have faced greater challenges in the post-2000 era as their belonging was never constructed on the basis of inclusion. As a result, they have had to adopt multiple forms of belonging as a strategy against threats of exclusion from national belonging.

In spite of political elites' obsession with rootedness in articulating belonging, the growth of the Zimbabwean diaspora following the political and economic crisis has seriously challenged the role of the state in defining peo-

ple's belonging. The diaspora has brought in transnationalism and other forms of belonging that seem to transcend state constructed national belonging. The phenomenal developments in information and communication technology in the last 10 years have revolutionised transnational practices among many diasporan Zimbabwean communities.

Information and communication technologies have created opportunities for immigrants to maintain sustained interpersonal contact with their families remaining in the homeland that has led to a phenomenal increase 'in the rate and extent of circulation between homeland and migratory destination' (Kivisto 2003). With the help of social networking sites they 'meet' and network and also get to discuss issues concerning home. It is a new kind of imagined community, based on cyber space, which seems to transcend what Benedict Anderson had in mind when he came up with the concept of imagined communities (Anderson 1993). The affordances of the Internet have made it possible for Diasporic communities to construct a sense of belonging without the need to physically meet. Thus, some Zimbabweans have turned to the Internet which allows them to virtually meet with others without the fear of the state's coercive forces.

Perhaps one important issue that the Internet is unravelling is that scholars have given too much power to state actors in framing national belonging. Many Zimbabweans have responded to state framed national belonging by resorting to dual/multiple belonging. Some even emigrate, change citizenship or acquire dual citizenship. Castles and Davidson (2000: 156) view globalisation and these new migrations as eroding the idea of belonging based on citizenship to a single nation. As Christiansen and Hedetoft (2004: 11) argue, 'national belonging is longer universally regarded (and treated) as hegemonic, singular and morally beyond question. "Multiple belonging" as well as politics and policies related thereto are imaginable and pursuable and as such are a real factor in many people's social, cultural and political lives.'

Commenting on Castles and Davidson (2000)'s end of national belonging argument and the idea of 'the citizen who does not belong'. Christiansen and Hedetoft (2004: 11) argue that this is a citizen 'whose sense of attachment is in a state of temporal and spatial contractedness, who is able to instrumentalise such individualised "identity diversity" in and for their life trajectories, and who has shed the hegemonic assumptions of national identity as homogeneous, absolute and unchanging'. This explanation allows us to deconstruct national belonging and recover other forms of belonging outside state hegemony. Thus, as dual/multiple belonging is becoming more and more important in the globalised world, it may be time to rethink the presumed hegemony of state framed national belonging.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis, it is apparent that belonging entails a wide range of things. It is about identity, religion, autochthony, locality and also about people's physical relationship with the landscape. Most importantly, belonging is a relational process which entails negotiation and acceptance in a group. This articlee has tried to analyse the complex interplay between migrations and the politics of belonging. An appeal to autochthony in negotiating and asserting belonging has been one of the key methods through which people and communities in Africa negotiate belonging. However, autochthony is a contested form of belonging as it is based on claims of being 'first comers' and having close links with the land.

It can also be concluded that land and rituals such as burials play a vital role in the definition of belonging in most African communities. The enduring question though is whether migrants really belong or due to exclusionary policies and the upsurge of forms of belonging such as autochthony, belonging will continue to be a hotly contested phenomenon, more so because it also entails non-belonging. It can also be argued that though belonging is largely a social construct, people's interaction with the materials and with objects also matter in their belonging. It is also apparent from the foregoing discussion that globalisation and new transnational migrations have engendered new forms of belonging which have allowed people to challenge the hegemony of the state and its construction and deployment on the idea of national belonging.

'Discipline and disengagement'

Cross-border migration and the quest for identity among the Ndebele
of South-western Zimbabwe

Vusilizwe Thebe

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a tale of a punitive state and an ethnic minority – ostracised not least for being politically different – but also, the presumed threat to postcolonial nation building. The setting is the Ndebele occupied areas of Zimbabwe, and the time, the period following the country's independence from the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) regime. In the short-, medium- and long-term, the arena became conducive for two of Nafziger's (2006:14) 'four horsemen of the apocalypse' – state violence and displacement. Indeed, state discipline played out through the deployment of unrestrained power, economic disenfranchisement and neglect, the concoction of which invoked suppressed feelings of disenchantment and ostracism, ill-suited to a nation building process. The phenomena at the levels of state, community, household and individual collided to create a protracted process of reciprocal disengagement as the quest for identity and belonging sent people into exile.

Scholarship has explored cross-border movements from Zimbabwe to South Africa from an economic and humanitarian perspective, linking the flow of migrants to the culture of violence and deteriorating economic environment. Characteristic of this perspective is its focus on the post-2000 crisis, and the tendency to portray cross-border migration from Zimbabwe as a homogenous process. But such a perspective has the unintended consequence of providing a rather skewed picture of Ndebele diasporisation into South Africa. It fails to analyse and factor the process within a broader historical context of state persecutions, alienation and identity politics. Such a perspective leaves little room to understand Ndebele migration within a context of struggle – a struggle for existence and identity, and a struggle for livelihoods by households, even if we are willing to accommodate the economic push/pull argument.

The chapter draws on wide ranging studies on the politics of Matabeleland and Ndebele migration into South Africa, which took the form of an extended case study of the Gwayi Valley, Lupane District of Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe, and extended interviews with 147 Ndebele migrants and

cross-border transporters in the Gauteng Province. The chapter will draw on this wide ranging work (e.g. Thebe 2009 & 2011), and reviews of literature on the post-independence Gukurahundi crisis in Matabeleland and Midlands Provinces, and to a lesser extent, the politics of the region. Below the author has set out the historical context, within which we can factor and analyse Ndebele cross-border migration to South Africa before turning to the terrain of events and their consequences.

THE STATE, TRIUMPHANT GROUPS AND THE 'INSIGNIFICANT OTHER'

The post-independence out-migration of the Ndebele people to South Africa can be understood in the context of decades-long history of reactive cross-border movements against state policy. It has its roots in past state policies, and became prominent after the Huggins administration's Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1942 (Johnson 1992, Vickery 1989). It has also been linked to both colonial and Zimbabwe African National Union ZANU (Patriotic Front) triumphalism of the late nineteenth twentieth centuries respectively, and subsequently, the growing perceptions of discrimination and disenfranchisement (Alexander & McGregor 2001, Musemwa 2006 Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008), and should be taken as a wider process which Sithole et al. (2003) refer to as 'society-sponsored disengagement'.

Society-sponsored disengagement manifests itself through rational actions by ordinary citizens to 'withdraw from the realms of state authority' (ibid:2). The manifestation of such disengagement results from two related processes by the state: first, extensive intervention by the state in an attempt to regulate behaviour through authoritative means (e.g. Scott 1998); second, an absent or weak state, which lacks legitimacy and is characterised by the 'retrenchment of state elites who encounter limits to the reach of public authority' according to Sithole et al.(2003:2).

Certainly, the colonial and postcolonial states in Zimbabwe employed the two as central strategies in dealing with certain groups – racial (e.g. Bush & Cliffe 1984, Duggan 1980, Thompson 2004) or ethnic (Alexander 1991, Musemwa 2006, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). In the years approaching World War II – and certainly during the war – colonial capitalism, premised on the tapping of cheap African labour was under threat, following the decline in the labour supply from the northern territories (Johnson 1992, Vickery 1989: 428). In Southern Rhodesia, as in other parts of colonial Africa, where the general stereo-type of a loafing African dominated European thinking, settler businesses succeeded in lobbying for state intervention through compulsory conscription of African labour (Johnson 1992). Indeed, the deployment of coercion in the recruitment of African labour for settler businesses reached its peak with the enactment of

the Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1942. This was enforced by the Native Commissioners indirectly through the traditional leadership structures and directly through Native Department officials (Johnson 1992, Vickery 1989).

Even then, Africans remained 'totally adverse and antagonistic', and escaped compulsory conscription by taking up voluntary employment in towns and country districts (Johnson 1992:122). Various colonial documents of the time show how conscription of compulsory labour gangs in Matabeleland became a catalyst for out-migration to the Union of South Africa. Johnson noted that every call for conscription was followed by an exodus of men to South Africa, where they would stay for up to three years or longer. In every Ndebele district, a call for conscription would generate an increase in the south-ward flow of labour, creating a chronic dearth in labour supply (Johnson 1992). Overtime, this south-wards flow of labour, mainly to 'eGoli', became entrenched in Ndebele communities as a rite of passage to manhood (Maphosa 2010, Mlambo 2010).

During the country's struggle for independence, out-migration from Zimbabwe continued, with about 228 000 refugees, and others disgruntled with the colonial system opting to fight the system from outside the country in neighbouring countries (Alexander & McGregor 2004, Mlambo 2010). Thus, crossing the country's borders became central to people's struggles against state oppression and disenfranchisement, and resistance against compulsory military conscription (call-up). As Alexander and McGregor (2004) observed, earlier movements – the onset of the military campaign in the 1960s – were individual initiatives, but from the mid-1970s onwards, as the struggle against the Rhodesian state intensified, these journeys became more organised and were undertaken through a complex network of actors at various stages on the continuum. To a large extent, each actor in the migration chain, and the majority of the African population were sympathetic to the process and provided some form of support.

With regard to the second, the colonial conquest of the Ndebele in 1893, and its subsequent consolidation, the settler administration used a variety of statutes not only to expropriate the land from indigenous people but also to determine where they were to settle (Moyana 1984). In the case of the Ndebele, the basis for their geographical world was the 1894 Matabeleland Order-in-Council, through whose provision two 'waterless and malaria tracts' were allocated as reserves for their settlement (Chigora & Guzura 2008:516). The delimitation of reserves continued until 1914 with the Native Purchase Areas (NPA) in 1930 and Special Native Areas (SNA) in 1950 (see Prescott 1961). The majority of native reserves were situated in agro-ecological hostile environments, which deprived indigenous Africans of their means of subsistence. To illustrate, half the native reserves occupied regions classified as only suitable for extensive ranching, and only 14 per cent of all native reserved land

was classified as suited for crop production. Even then, these areas soon became overcrowded and overstocked, resulting in massive degradation and decreased arable land (Prescott 1961, Thompson 2004, 2007).

The colonial state extended native areas into unallocated areas (Lebert 2006, Prescott 1961), although the impoverishment of the reserves continued well into the 1940s (Duggan 1980). The state also adopted a highly interventionist approach to the management of native areas – directing peasant production, controlling land-use and determining who could have access to land through provisions of the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951 (Thompson 2004, Wolmer & Scoones 2000). In both theory and practice, the NLHA was concerned more with good land husbandry and conservation, which according to Duggan (1980: 228), ‘seldom raise productivity but rather prevent further decline’. The policy also proceeded simultaneously with the denigration of African traditional production systems, while protecting whitesettlers from African competition in the product markets (Bush & Cliffe 1984, Duggan 1980).

At independence in 1980, the postcolonial state saw the land reform programme as necessary to redress colonial injustices but also to create rural smallholder farming communities (Chimhowu & Hulme 2006). With regards to Matabeleland, postcolonial state policy is often hampered by the ‘post-colonial violence and its memory’ (Alexander et al. 2000). The history of hostilities between ZANU (PF) and Zimbabwe African People’s Union ZAPU, and failed attempts by the former to build a nation-state, were crucial in shaping post-colonial policy towards Matabeleland (see Alexander 1991, Musemwa 2006, Muzondidya & Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007). The conflict between ZANU (PF) and ZAPU had an ethnic dimension, enacted and reproduced through the political split in 1963 (Muzondidya & Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007:281), and the history of animosity and mistrust between the two liberation movements, their leadership and their respective armed wings (Alexander 1998:152, Bhebe 2004, Musemwa 2006).

The postcolonial state’s policy towards the region between 1980 and 1987 can be defined in what Ndlovu-Gatsheni calls ‘post-colonial re-tribalisation and provincialisation of Ndebele identity’. This followed ZANU (PF)’s failed policy of reconciliation towards ZAPU, which was abandoned in haste in 1982 following armed caches and incidences of dissidence in Matabeleland North (Alexander 1991 & 1994). Despite ZANU (PF)’s initial desire to impose a one-party state by incorporating ZAPU as a junior partner in a coalition government, the relations between the two quickly degenerated, with state policy towards Ndebele regions increasingly becoming repressive. Others have shown that repression took an ethnic dimension through the ‘Gukurahundi’ campaign in the region – ‘ZAPU’ became synonymous with ‘Ndebele’ and ultimately, ‘Ndebele’ with ‘dissidence’ (e.g. Alexander & McGregor 2005:81, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). While the ‘Gukurahundi’ campaign was a response to threats to law and order,

some analysts saw it as ZANU (PF)'s strategy of eliminating the only obstacle to its hegemony:

The ethnically inspired clashes between Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) in the Assembly Points, the running away of some ex-ZIPRA combatants back to the bush, . . . and the 'discovery' of arms caches in PF-ZAPU owned farms around Bulawayo gave the Shona-led government a pretext to use state power to crush PF-ZAPU once and for all, demonstrate to the Ndebele who was in power and widen ZANU-PF control into the south-western part of the country (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008:45).

Gukurahundi sought to eliminate differences and their sources. It was a policy of annihilation ... The failure of Gukurahundi to liquidate PF-ZAPU in its strongholds – as reflected in the 1985 elections when the party grabbed all 15 contested seats in Matabeleland region – convinced ZANU-PF to try other means of achieving the same end (Masunungure 2006:5–6).

This strategy effectively denied the Ndebele any voice in decisions concerning their development (Alexander 1991).

Alongside state repression, resource allocation remained skewed against Ndebele regions, and people felt abandoned and marginalised by the state. Even then, after the 'marriage of convenience, which took the form of a Unity Accord in 1987, a crisis of expectation soon developed among the rural and urban populace. As Musemwa (2006:249) noted, 'The people's frustration with the slow pace of development . . . was translated into perceptions of past and present abandonment and ethnic discrimination'. It was this feeling of abandonment – played out in a context of perennial crop failure, a semi-proletariat culture, economic uncertainty and a long history of interaction and social networks in South Africa that set the scene for Ndebele diasporisation to South Africa, and subsequently, the complete dependence of the region on the South Africa and Botswana economies.

THE REGION AND THE TERRAIN OF EVENTS

In migration analysis, it is not unusual to focus on causation, or put rather differently, the push/pull opus of migration. This interplay between the coercive and the option makes accounts about population movements rather intriguing. In Matabeleland, these accounts place post-independence events at the centre stage and at the doorsteps of the Zimbabwean nation-state, and the implication

that these processes would have been avoided – if only state power was exercised differently. Ndebele scholars are certainly guilty of this kind of analysis. Alois Mlambo observed:

The 1980s witnessed two waves of out-migration, most to South Africa. The first was the exodus of whites fleeing black rule. The second migration wave, as yet unquantified, was the movement of thousands of Ndebele people from the south-western part of the country into South Africa and Botswana to escape the ‘Gukurahundi’ massacres of the early 1980s when the Zimbabwean government’s Korean-trained 5th Brigade brought terror to Matabeleland in its efforts to put down anti-government rebels, labelled by the government as ‘dissidents’.

The early 1980s were certainly significant in the history of Matabeleland. On the one hand, independence brought change, hope and a return to normalcy after years of war. On the other, independence marked the beginning of a different struggle, defined by widespread displacement, far more traumatic than experienced during 30 years of war against colonialism (Werbner 1991).

As earlier noted, the post-1982 events followed a history of animosities and distrust between ZANU (PF) and ZAPU, which was defined by a catalogue of events since the 1960s. Key to this, was the ethnic split from the ZAPU, led by Joshua Nkomo and the formation of a rival political movement, ZANU engineered by a core group of Shona-speaking nationalists in 1963. This split later defined relations between the Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups as the two movements became dominated by leaders of a certain ethnicity – ZAPU by people of Ndebele origin and ZANU by the Shona (Alexander 1998, Bhebe 2004, Masunungure 2006). Perhaps the critical manifestation of the fissures in Ndebele/Shona relations was the massacre of ZIPRA cadres in Tanzania and Mozambique in 1976 (Alexander 1998, Bhebe 2004). Thus, hostilities were carried into the war front in Zimbabwe where the two armed wings often clashed in the late 1970s. Former ZIPRA cadres recalled battles in common war zones like Chirundu, Gokwe and Hurungwe. According to a former ZIPRA cadre who was involved in these skirmishes:

We often called ZANLA guerrillas by the derogatory names ‘*oSadza nehuku*’ or ‘*opasi*’, and treated them as an adversary, just like the Rhodesian Front (RF) soldiers and the District Administration (DA) messengers’ (Oral interview, 12 Nov. 2005).⁹

The extent of the ethnic dimension of the conflict was exacerbated by recruitment patterns during the liberation war (Alexander 1998, Bhebe 2004). ZIPRA had its base camps in Botswana and Zambia and operated mainly in the Ndebele-occupied northern front while ZANLA had its bases in Mozambique

and had operational areas in the Shona occupied eastern areas (Alexander 1998, Musemwa 2006, Worby 2001). Although the two armed formations were national in character, these geographical areas of operation conferred an ethnic support and identity on each army. Unfortunately, these fissures developed during the liberation war defined political allegiance during the first democratic elections in 1980, with ZAPU claiming convincing victories in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces (Alexander et al. 2000).

Ethnically motivated hostilities and distrust were carried over at independence, and the two military wings clashed in Assembly Points (APs) and within the newly integrated units of the Zimbabwe National Army in 1980 and 1981. Then, in February 1982, the government announced the discovery of arms caches on ZAPU properties and around ZIPRA APs, and arrested senior ZIPRA officials on treason charges. These incidents were certainly significant, and masked the ethnic nature of the conflict. These were not helped by incidents of banditry (mostly by former ZIPRA cadres), in which six foreign tourists were abducted and killed in Matabeleland North Province. To deal with the situation but also to punish the Ndebele for their allegiance to ZAPU, the government deployed the army, the police Support Units and the CIO in Matabeleland in 1982, and the Fifth Brigade or 'Gukurahundi' in 1983 (Alexander 1998, CCJP & LRF 1997). As Alexander (1998) noted, the consequences of the arms caches and subsequent incidents lay in the violence and victimisation of former ZIPRA cadres inside and outside the army. Even then, these incidents could not compare to the 'Gukurahundi' campaign against unarmed civilians. From its deployment in 1982 to its withdrawal from Matabeleland South in 1983, the unit engaged in a series of human rights violations, the list of which included abductions, rape, torture and death at the extreme (CCJP & LRF 1997, Musemwa 2006). In Lupane District, the army and Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) ran a detention camp at St. Paul's Mission (Alexander 1998:157) while in northern parts of the district, people were often assembled at the Jotsholo Growth Point's Rest Camp, where they were coerced into denouncing Nkomo and ZAPU, and being 'Ndebele' through slogan, song and dance. As others have noted, the dance was often forced, the song was in an unfamiliar language, and these were often spiced through physical torture (Alexander 1998, CCJP 2008).

DISPLACEMENT AND CROSS-BORDER FLIGHTS

It was in the context of persecutions of former ZIPRA guerrillas inside and outside the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) and the civilian population in rural Matabeleland that the first wave in post-independence cross-border movements occurred (see Alexander 1998, Mlambo 2010). In the post-arms discovery pe-

riod, the violent campaign on Ndebele civilians and former Zipra cadres was not confined to the Fifth Brigade but other security forces deployed in Matabeleland region. As Jocelyn Alexander noted:

Battalions of the First and Second Brigades, Police Support Units and elite para-troop units were dispatched to Matabeleland, where they worked in conjunction with the CIO in tracking down 'dissident elements', ... Detention camps run by the CIO and army were established in 1982 and after ..., where anyone believed to have aided or abetted dissidents, as well as former ZIPRA combatants, members of the Rhodesian army, even serving members of the ZNA home on leave, were tortured and sometimes killed (1998: 157).

Given the magnitude of violence, it would be surprising if the military campaign did not induce mass displacements. But these were no ordinary displacements. For the first time after the country's independence, large numbers of people left their places of comfort for places of safety. In order to survive persecution, a section of former ZIPRA cadres fled to the bush and took up arms but others joined civilians into Botswana. Towards this end, the Dukwe Refugee Camp was established to accommodate the influx of people but others proceeded into South Africa where they had relatives or took up jobs in commercial farms on transit to Johannesburg (Thebe 2011).

Early migrants in an Oral Interview at Plumtree Border Post on 29 December 2009 still remember:

Quite a number of us left Dukwe for South Africa ... I ended up at a farm in Thabazimbi area where I worked for two years (Oral Interview, Plumtree, 29 Dec. 2009).

We walked through thick forests, taking up temporary jobs in commercial farms before moving on again (Oral Interview, Plumtree Border Post, 29 Dec. 2009).

The flow of Ndebele migrants into South Africa continued after 1984 as the postcolonial state resorted to covert tactics after the withdrawal of the Fifth Brigade from Matabeleland South in 1983. On conservative estimates as regards the period of arrival in South Africa for post-Gukuruhundi era migrants, the majority had arrived between 1984 and 1990. With the continued security threat by a band of armed dissidents, the state maintained a strong security presence in Matabeleland, and military operations were often accompanied by torture, beatings, abduction and disappearances, and in the process, enculturation into Shona culture through coerced dance routines and language usage (see Alexander 1998, CCJP 2008). While cultural hegemony applied to all people, violence was often directed at young males and former ZIPRA cadres

who were subjected to arrest and detention after every reported incidence of dissidence. It is in this case that one agrees with Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2008: 47) assertion that, 'violence was the only invitation card by which the Ndebele were invited into a Shona-imagined nation. Matabeleland had to be conquered and forced into part of Zimbabwe'.

Foremost among the strategies employed by the state, particularly after 1984, were neglect and discrimination against Ndebele-occupied areas. Various narratives abound in the region. Two such narratives enjoy wider consensus: first, that resource distribution in post-independent Zimbabwe remain skewed against Ndebele-occupied areas (Alexander 1991, Herbst 1990, Ncube 1990); and second, that the postcolonial state is a Shona state, advancing the hegemony of the dominant Shona over the minority Ndebele. The first was recently captured by ZAPU President, Dumiso Dabengwa: 'ZAPU is convinced the people of Matabeleland and some parts of the Midlands have genuine grievances against the current governance system that has disadvantaged them'. (newzimbabwe.com, 5 May 2011). The second was evident through the deployment of Shona-speaking bureaucrats including primary school teachers to Matabeleland. Among the Ndebele, this generated perceptions that the job market was not a level playing ground and that some ethnic groups received preference over others.

However, neglect became more explicit in the area of land reform, where in spite of past land alienation, resettlement land made available in Matabeleland was rented to commercial ranchers, civil servants and parastatals (Alexander 1991). As a consequence, most Ndebele-speaking regions lost out on the 'agricultural miracle' of the 1980s and most households faced severe food insecurity. Even then, drought relief remained highly politicised by ZANU (PF)-appointed councillors. Also, in the context of the conflict, development projects dried-up between 1982 and 1987, purportedly, due to the security threat (Musemwa 2006). Interestingly, the City of Bulawayo, which was relatively peaceful fared no better. The state failed to resuscitate the city's water delivery system and to build other infrastructure, leading to severe water shortages (Gunby et al. 2001, Musemwa 2006). Unsurprisingly, the Ndebele interpreted this as an attempt to eliminate them through thirst and starvation.

The population of Bulawayo had increased from 495 317 in 1982 to 1 million in 1992, but the last supply dam for the city was built in 1976 (Gunby et al. 2001). One critic suggested a sinister motive in an Oral Interview in Bulawayo on 20 November 2005 that 'It would seem the government deliberately withheld funding to augment water to induce capital flight and throw livelihoods into crisis' (Oral Interview, Bulawayo, 20 Nov. 2005). Bulawayo is the main livelihood centre for Ndebele households and due to the violence in rural Matabeleland, farming activities had grounded to a halt as people fled to this city. On its part, the Bulawayo City Council had long-term strategies of augmenting

the city's water supply through damming the confluences of the Gwayi-Khami and Gwayi-Shangani rivers, uMshabezi, Glassblock and Zambezi Rivers, which were never given the green light by the government due to costs and shortage of foreign currency (Musemwa 2006).

In the context of the above when peace finally came to the region through the Unity Peace Pact (Unity Accord) of 1987, people expected a special dispensation or a form of economic payback for agreeing to the merger and support of ZANU-PF (Alexander & McGregor 2001), but frustrations soon grew on the slow pace of development (Musemwa 2006). The crisis of expectations that followed led to despondence and anger against the state. As the dissidence problem presented an opportunity for the state to exert punishment on the region, both men and women sought ways for an alternative existence and South Africa, even in the context of apartheid, provided such an alternative through social contacts and common culture.

However, the prevalence of cross-border flights remained concentrated in south-western districts, not only because of the intensity of the military campaign and neglect, but also the availability of contacts in South Africa through earlier migrants and shared common languages with some South African ethnic groups. Cross-border flights were not always about economics or a search for livelihoods. Prior to the adoption of economic liberalisation measures in 1991, the corporatist regime adopted at independence was more 'efficient in orthodox terms than expected (Stoneman & Cliffe 1989:120), the economy grew at 4.7 per cent between 1980 and 1986 while employment growth averaged 2.5 per cent. Some of the migrants held prestigious and well paying jobs in Zimbabwe, which they swapped for menial jobs in South Africa. One former student in an oral interview on 23 July 2008 once joked: 'University students from the region would leave the graduation podium with their bags packed for the journey to *eGoli*'. While not trying to preempt anything from the joke, it is possible that they did, and that students from the region were not spared the covert treatment in the country's premier institution. In fact, a sense of solidarity was beginning to develop among Ndebele students at the University of Zimbabwe, through political gatherings disguised as 'Highlanders Football Club Supporters Meetings' and later the 'Matabeleland Development Society (MDS)'. It was also no coincidence that Ndebele students would pack Theatre Halls during live performances of theatre pieces that portrayed life in South Africa ('*EGoli*' and Amakhosi Theatre's '*Dabulap*').

These cannot be dismissed as irrelevant, and out-migration to South Africa should not be viewed simply as a search for greener pastures. The author will illustrate this through the case of Khululeka Masuku.

Case 1: Stuck in one military rank

Khululeka Masuku was integrated into the Zimbabwe National Army in 1980 as Captain, and by 1988 he was still Captain. Former ZANLA officers who held lower ranks at integration had risen above him in ranks, yet he and other former ZIPRA cadres whose army careers had also stagnated had superior training, acquired in the former USSR, Cuba and the Eastern block (see also Alexander 1998). Despondent, humiliated and angry, he had demobilised from the ZNA and left the country for South Africa, where he joined an armed response division of one Security Company. His tale reads familiar to tales by other Ndebele migrants in South Africa – professional teachers eking out a living in the hospitality industry, university graduates living a life of crime in Johannesburg, etc.

Alexander and McGregor (2001) identified the 1990s as crucial in the state-Ndebele relations. In Matabeleland, agricultural failure had reached levels of crisis, and food aid remained highly politicised. Urban livelihoods were under threat after the government adopted the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). The programme was characterised by retrenchments from the public and private sectors, and the turnaround affected mainly worker-peasants' livelihoods through loss of remittances (Bird & Shepherd 2003). As remittances from the urban sector dried-up, households that were previously livelihood secure plunged into a livelihood crisis. While the effects of ESAP were felt throughout the country, in Matabeleland these hardships built on already strong layers of past and present neglect.

There is evidence that these series of events exacerbated out-migration to South Africa, as the majority of migrants that crossed the border during this time either held jobs in Zimbabwe. Using evidence from a study on channels of remittances from South Africa to Matabeleland (Thebe 2011), over half the migrants arrived in South Africa between 1993 and 2000. Of these, 79 per cent held jobs in Zimbabwe before coming to South Africa as industrial workers, civil servants, police or armed forces, retailers or private security guards. While the majority (66%) of these had lost their jobs in Zimbabwe, others felt that they were pushed from their jobs by the system.

The magnitude of human suffering brought by ESAP was exacerbated by the timing of the programme. ESAP coincided with the severe 1991/1992 drought, but in semi-arid Matabeleland droughts are recurrent. When ESAP struck, drought had eroded households' coping mechanisms. Although climatic conditions improved during the next few agricultural seasons, due to loss of remittances, households failed to rebuild their livestock herds or buy inputs (Bird & Shepherd 2003). Among worker-peasants, wage remittances have of-

ten provided 'timely sources of investment for the historically most successful communal area farmer, as well as protecting all farmers against the periodic shedding of assets, occasioned by drought (Worby 2001:487).

The collapse of livelihoods transformed the complexion of cross-border migration, which was initially confined to a few. Suffice to say, initially cross-border migration was despised, because migrants occupied menial jobs and had a reputation for disappearing in Johannesburg. Society used derogatory terms like '*umgewu*' or '*iphalavu*' to discourage such acts (Maphosa 2010). Even then, there were other accompanying names for South African-based migrants like '*injiva*', or '*onjivana*' (Thebe 2009). But, it was food security experienced in migrant households at a time when the region was faced with a perennial food production crisis that made cross-border migration a major livelihood decision for households (Maphosa 2010, Thebe 2011). The change in the character of the new migrants also transformed household livelihoods. The migration of educated members of households and women, some of whom had left children in the care of their parents coincided with a change in remitting behaviour of migrants (Thebe 2009, 2011). It is not surprising that there was a surge in demand for the transportation of goods after 1995 – the new migrants came to South Africa with clear objectives to seek livelihood opportunities for themselves and their families back home.

In rural Matabeleland, the collapse of rural and urban-based livelihoods put pressure on earlier migrants to intervene through the provision of food (maize-meal, sugar and wheat flour) and financial assistance (Thebe 2011). The flow of remittances to Matabeleland became easier and more regular with the advent of the '*malayisha*' system (cross-border transporters) (see Maphosa 2010, SPT 2009). As others have noted, initially, '*omalayisha*' were not strangers to communities they served. They were sons, husbands, brothers and part of the wider kin network (e.g. Maphosa 2010, Thebe 2011). It was in the context of this complex network of relationships that out-migration increased with the in-flow of goods. On their out-ward journey from Zimbabwe, transporters would assist kin into South Africa, and such assistance was also extended to relatives of colleagues in South Africa at a nominal fee.

THE EFFECT OF REMITTANCES FROM SOUTH AFRICA

If the 1990s were crucial in defining Ndebele-state relations, the post-2000 period was equally important – not only because of the post-election violence but the region's economics. The flow of goods to Matabeleland increased as the country's economy went into meltdown and the region became entirely reliant on the South African and Botswana economies. The economic context informed what was remitted across the border to Matabeleland and the return cargo into

South Africa. While the in-flows, either to Bulawayo or rural Matabeleland, included food, luxury goods and building materials, out-flows comprised of humans. Thebe (2011) pointed to the blurring of the divide between goods and passenger carriers as the '*malayisha*' system got overwhelmed by demand, and human smuggling became a core business for both transport systems.

This new wave of migration into South Africa covered the whole of Zimbabwe but in Matabeleland, migration was particularly made easier through social networks (Sibanda 2010, Thebe 2009, 2011). Migrants were expatriating their immediate families into South Africa *en-masse*, and '*omalayisha*' would openly solicit for customers on their return trips from Zimbabwe (Thebe 2011). Evidence from the 2011 study reveals that migrants knew at least a relative, a neighbour or a friend, working in South Africa and willing to finance the migration process. While solicitation has received extensive coverage from the media, the role of early migrants in facilitating the migration of kin remains largely ignored.

Cross-border transporters were carrying items that were once basic in the country plus luxury products, which usually attract import duty in Zimbabwe. It would appear that besides migrants feeding and clothing their families from the South African economy, they were creating places of comfort for themselves and relatives: consumables, electric gadgets, solar panels, building materials, bedroom and lounge suites, etc. (Maphosa 2010, Thebe 2011). The '*malayisha*' system would ship anything across the border at a price and on a regular basis, and even though shop shelves remained empty some migrant families could still afford three decent meals a day (Thebe 2011).

As noted in Maphosa (2010) and Thebe (2009), through '*omalayisha*', migrant households in rural Matabeleland also invested in both essential and luxury assets, and became a major source of rural employment. Through the remittances from South Africa, rural communities became increasingly stratified. Migrant households came to occupy a new stratum, replacing the traditional rural upper hierarchy of teachers and urban workers (Thebe 2009). Evidence from the 2011 study shows that over half of the rural migrants had invested in their rural homes: building modern brick houses, powered with solar energy, and furnished with refrigerators and other electronic gadgets. Some had connected their homes with running water from boreholes, drilled within the compound.

RECIPROCAL DISENGAGEMENT

While state persecutions, perceptions of neglect and discrimination certainly strained the relations between Matabeleland and the state, it was the ease of entry into South African and Botswana, and the '*malayisha*' system that assisted the withdrawal of the region from the country's economy. The author refers to

this process as reciprocal disengagement from the state by the people and to a smaller extent, the region. By 1993, Musemwa (2006) noted a growing chorus of resentment against the postcolonial state over the development embargo in the region, championed mainly by Ndebele politicians who had previously endorsed the merger between ZANU (PF) and ZAPU. This chorus was to echo the loudest during the 2000 parliamentary elections when 21 out of 23 constituents in Matabeleland rejected ZANU (PF).

HOW TO SEE THE STATE AS THE TRIUMPHANT OTHER

Little attention has been paid to the attitudes and subsequently, the behaviour of the people of Matabeleland towards the state, but it is safe to conclude that people felt deprived of opportunities at home. For many migrants, the decision to cross the border was an easy one, made for them by the state. People felt like strangers in a country they called theirs, and according to one migrant in an oral interview at Plumtree Border Post on 21 December 2009, 'South Africa provided a new home, life and hope, when what was once home rejected us'. Unsurprisingly, Ndebele migrants struggle to identify with the post-colonial nation, and often refer to the country as '*ezweni labo*' (their country) and hold rigidly to the view that their leaving Zimbabwe was an act of banishment (Thebe 2011).

People in Matabeleland remain bitter that they lack a legitimate voice in issues of governance, despite the historical role they played in liberating the country, as leaders, fighters and collaborators. It is no uncommon occurrence for Ndebele migrants and others in online discussion forums to express their displeasure with the Zimbabwean state and the Shona ethnic groups. Web discussion forums, mainly dominated by people from the diaspora, like 'Makhox', 'Real Man at Makhox', 'Makhox Dating' and 'Jokes in Ndebele' (JIN) are now forums used to exchange views on Matabeleland and it is in these forums that anti-state and Shona sentiments emerge (see also Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008:50). It is not a coincidence that Ndebele migrants in South Africa call Matabeleland '*ezweni*'¹⁰ as if it is an isolated entity from Zimbabwe. This narrow definition of a country is very significant in how people from Matabeleland see the region in relation to the whole country. As has become apparent, state policy towards the region only served to invoke ethnic identity and a 'sense of not being part of Zimbabwe' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008:48).

More importantly, the Ndebele's perception of the Shona influx into South Africa is that of encroachment. Ndebele migrants would constantly ask: '*Senifunani? Nasixosh' ezweni nenzela ukulibulala, manje niyasilandela?*' (What do you want here? You expelled us from the country so that you can destroy it, now you have followed us?). Ndebele migrants in South Africa will also go

to great lengths to disassociate themselves from Shona migrants by referring to them as 'people from the east' (*abantu basempumalanga*). These views now dominate internet chat forums. Two recent posts in the 'Makhox Dating' site bear testimony:

*Buti, ubusubaswele abakini empumalanga uzosibhedela. Ucabanga ukuthi singasuka kude kangaka sizodlala ishona eGoli.*¹¹

*Kanti ulahlekile yini lona? Akawazi ama 'websites' akubo.*¹²

Put rather simply, migrants' attitude towards the postcolonial state and the Shona people, represents general Ndebele feelings, and should not be viewed separate from state policy towards the region and its people.

THE QUEST FOR BELONGING

Ndebele migrants adopted various strategies in their quest for belonging and identity in South Africa. As such, migrants often changed their identities in order to fit into the new environment. They also adopted the local dialect and identified with a particular language group in the country. The quest for belonging did not stop there, migrants would also attempt to legalise their status in South Africa through acquisition of South African nationality. Literature tends to focus on the fraudulent process of legalising migrants' status, and neglect the role of South African nationals in assisting migrants with the process, and more importantly, claims by migrants through parents who had legal status in South Africa. Two factors make these even more relevant: the historical ties between people of Matabeleland and some South African groups, and the transnational character of migrants. Nevertheless, in situations where migrants failed in their bid for a South African nationality, they were assisted with cloned documents – a process known as '*khupha faka*'. The use of cloned documents constitutes a fraud, and is confined to seeking employment. Also, cloned documents do not grant a migrant legal status or immunity against arrest, but they guarantee the holder a livelihood opportunity.

Due to their status as illegal aliens, migrants were vulnerable to abuse by South African police even before the post-2000 influx. But more often, they used their networks within the South African community and the police as a survival strategy for continued stay. In the event where migrants were arrested and deported, they never reached their destination. Instead, they used these networks to re-enter the country. Over the years, migrants from Zimbabwe have used the revolving door syndrome to perfection, thus making a mockery of South Africa's enforcement regime.

WHEN 'FOREIGN' BECOMES BETTER COMFORT

As the postcolonial state abandoned its mandate in Matabeleland, thereby plunging development processes and household livelihoods into jeopardy, the Ndebele, in reciprocity, slowly disengaged from the state. Neighbouring economies assisted this gradual disengagement, providing the households not only with livelihoods but a decent existence. Households' withdrawal from the state is felt more in communities where cross-border migrancy and the activities of '*omalayisha*' are more pronounced. Where households' food security was precarious due to low harvests and empty shop shelves, '*omalayisha*' generated a constant supply of consumer goods to beneficiary households, and they came to occupy a central role in the region's economic system (eg. Maphosa 2010, SPT 2009, Thebe 2011). Some of these deliveries would include items that were freely available in the country, for instance ordinary drugs. But people would justify their consumption of foreign products on the supposed inferiority of local products – '*amafong kong*' or '*amajing-jong*' (Thebe 2011).

Some people also link '*omalayisha*' to the parallel economy and development structures, which emerged in some rural communities of Matabeleland after 2005. In addition to supplying consumer goods, they also doubled as foreign currency dealers, a process that flooded rural communities with foreign currency (Maphosa 2010). For some communities, even the Zimbabwean dollar became an inferior commodity as the South African Rand and Botswana Pula flooded the economic system. Communities in Kezi, Plumtree and Tsholotsho districts abandoned the Zimbabwean Dollar in favour of the South African Rand, long before the country adopted the multi-currency system (Thebe 2011).

CONCLUSION

The questions for the present are simple enough: how do we characterise the movement of people from the Ndebele hinterland to South Africa? Can these movements be treated as just one of those movements of people from a region of economic turmoil to another of economic opportunities? At the time this work began, Zimbabwe's economic downturn had reached alarming proportions and the flow of migrants across the Limpopo River was increasing. Ndebele migration became a part of a wide attempt to understand the process and its implications, and in the process the distinction between migration from Matabeleland – with its long history and complex characteristics – and that from the rest of the country, which peaked after year 2000, blurred. The ironic deployment by ZANU (PF) and government of '*Gukurahundi*'¹³ as a strategy to deal with its previous constituencies in the post-2000 did not change the

past, or the pain and people's attitudes. In the case of the Ndebele, these actions brought an old enemy to their midst.

Obviously, the attitude of migrants from Matabeleland towards Shona migrants shows the gulf between the two groups. For long, people from outside Matabeleland engaged in 'purpose-specific, circulatory migration' (Zinyama 2002) while migration among the Ndebele was rather translocational – people migrate, settle in South Africa, assist kin into South Africa, and together, provide for their places of origin. Ndebele migration is complex, intertwined in a web where the cause determined the effect. In this case, the cause was the policy of the postcolonial state, and the effect, the withdrawal of the people, households and to some extent, the region from the state. While initially, migration to South Africa was based on the perceived danger or harm to the migrant, later movements were spurred by perceptions of disenfranchisement. In part, South Africa offered not only home but migrants found identity and belonging.

Cross-border migration by the Ndebele became a protracted process of reciprocal disengagement from a state that used its hegemony to punish a dissident community through both overt and covert means. But, as households fought for livelihoods, and the region struggled to relocate itself within the economic and political system, cross-border transporters assumed a central role in the covert struggle, moving cash, goods and people to Zimbabwe, and migrants to South Africa, and bridging the geographical gap between Matabeleland and Johannesburg in the process. Through such activities, the region managed to navigate through what many in the region saw as a well orchestrated 'economic, educational, developmental and cultural embargo,' intended to turn the region into a 'theatre of beggars'.

Homo sacer

Citizenship, exclusion and irregular labour migration from
Matabeleland, Zimbabwe, to South Africa

France Maphosa

INTRODUCTION

Homo sacer is a concept that was used by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1998) to refer to a naked or bare life that is depoliticised. Though he has a biological life, *homo sacer*, has no political significance. The term *homo sacer* was borrowed from ancient Roman law under which a man who committed a certain kind of crime was banned from society and all his rights as a citizen revoked. This status meant that such a man could be killed by anybody but could not be sacrificed in a ritual ceremony. *Homo sacer* is therefore the direct opposite of citizen. A citizen does not only have the right to political and economic participation but also the right to protection by the sovereign. Those who are excluded from these rights – *homo sacer* – exist in what Agamben refers to as ‘zones of exception’ or ‘zones of indistinction’ in which the application of the law is suspended. One who falls into this zone;

[I]s not, in fact simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather abandoned by it, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside become indistinguishable (Agamben 1998:28).

For Agamben, politics is preoccupied with the classification between inclusion and exclusion, between forms of life the sovereign will protect and represent and those it will not. Rajaran and Grundy-Warr (2004) used the concept of *homo sacer* to describe irregular migrants in Australia, Malaysia and Thailand. They argue that as used to indicate exclusion, today the term is applicable to ‘terrorists,’ refugees and irregular migrants. The experiences of irregular migrants from Matabeleland in Zimbabwe fit a type of life portrayed by the concept of *homo sacer*.

THE MATABELELAND PROBLEM

Several writers have discussed the Matabeleland problem as one of sustained political, economic and cultural domination, suppression, exclusion and marginalisation in postcolonial Zimbabwe, (Alexander et.al. 2000, Musemwa 2006; Mhlanga 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). The postcolonial state in Zimbabwe has over the years used various labels such as 'dissidents', 'detractors' and 'enemies of the state' to exclude people from both political and economic participation and protection by the state. For example 'dissident' was a term that was used not only to justify exclusion but also to denote individuals who could be killed with impunity. The term was not confined to individuals but to cities, regions and whole ethnic groups. This is lucidly captured by Musemwa (2006)'s use of the phrase 'disciplining a "dissident" city:' to explain lack of serious political efforts to find a lasting solution to the perennial water problems of Bulawayo, Matabeleland's largest city.

According to Darbon (1992) the military operations in the provinces of the south of the country during *Gukurahundi* operations gave the state an excuse to unleash intimidation on the local population. This was done through the use of force, imprisonment, torture, maiming and killing and blocking of development aid and food. As Alexander and others (2000) observe, even after the cosmetic unity agreement of 1987, no deliberate development effort was embarked on in Matabeleland. There was no programme put in place to compensate the region for the loss through violence and neglect.

Mhlanga (2010) provides several examples which prove that there has been a deliberate effort by the postcolonial government in Zimbabwe to marginalise Matabeleland as a region in the distribution of national resources. The cases include the electrification of the railway line from Gweru to Harare, leaving out the Gweru to Bulawayo stretch despite the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) being headquartered in Bulawayo; the gradual relocation of heavy industries from Bulawayo to Harare and the unwillingness to implement the Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project.

One of the objectives of the land reform programme embarked on by the government of Zimbabwe beginning in 2000, particularly its fast track (*jam-banja*) phase was ostensibly to decongest the communal areas. This refers to reducing population pressure on the land. A Land Review Committee appointed by President Mugabe reported in 2003 that, for Matabeleland North; 'the impact on decongestion had therefore been negligible' (Land Review Committee, 2003: 122). With regards to Matabeleland South, the Committee reported that, 'Decongestion of rural areas has not been effected' (Land Review Committee, 2003: 130).

At the same time, the same Committee reported extremely high rates of up-take of land offered for resettlement in these areas. For example, Matabeleland

South had a 100 per cent uptake of farms offered under the A1 resettlement model while the uptake of similar offers in Matabeleland North was reported to be 120 per cent. The national average rate of uptake was 66 per cent, with Manicaland Province recording the lowest uptake rate of only 42 per cent.

There are two possible explanations for the apparent contradiction between the high rates of land uptake and the 'negligible' decongestion that occurred in the two Matabeleland provinces. One is that the land offered for resettlement might have been way too little for the already high demand for land. The other is that most of the people who were offered land for resettlement in these provinces were from outside the provinces. Whatever the reason, the land reform exercise which has been touted by the government as economic empowerment for the people of Zimbabwe had little if any benefits for people in Matabeleland, especially those in congested areas. This means that poverty levels continue to increase as land for farming continues to diminish in size and value.

At the height of the crises in Zimbabwe many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) either relocated from Zimbabwe, closed shop or scaled down their operations, mainly as a result of the unfavourable political environment in which they were often accused of funding opposition politics. As a result a lot of people who survived on support from NGOs, especially those in drought prone and marginalised communities in Matabeleland were left vulnerable. Deepening economic and political crises and limited livelihood options made migration the only way to guarantee survival in Matabeleland.

MIGRATION FROM ZIMBABWE TO SOUTH AFRICA

There is now a substantial amount of literature on migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa (van Onselen 1976; Paton 1995; Sachikonye 2003; Russell et.al. 1990; Crush and Tevera, Crush 2003; Crush et.al. 2005; Hobane 1996; Kanyenze 2004, Maphosa 2004, 2005, 2006). This is because of the long history of migration between the two countries. For example Crush (2003) found that 23 per cent of the Zimbabwean adult population have been to South Africa, 24 per cent have parents who have been to South Africa and another 23 per cent have grandparents who have been to South Africa. Although the labour contract system which was legally sanctioned and regulated by government to government agreements (Kanyenze 2004) was discontinued at independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has continued to be a major source of labour for South Africa. Zimbabwe's position as an exporter of labour to South Africa has continued to grow as a result of the political and economic meltdown in the country.

Pre-independence literature links migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa with the contract labour system that was used to attract labour to South

Africa's mines. Post independence literature generally links migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa with the economic and political crises that started in the 1990s and peaked around 2008. Such literature discusses issues such as the Gukurahundi crisis in Matabeleland which stretched throughout the 1980s, the structural adjustment programme, hyper-inflation, operation *Murambatsvina*, and the chaotic fast track land reform programme (*jambanja*) as the push factors. However, studies focusing on emigration from Matabeleland are very scarce (Hobane 1996; Maphosa 2004, 2005; Ncube 2011). This is despite the fact that besides the factors that have led to increased emigration nationwide, there are factors that are peculiar to Matabeleland that have led to high rates of largely irregular emigration. These factors include the recurrent droughts, the political violence of the 1980s unleashed in the province through the *Gukurahundi* operation in which thousands of people perished and the general political, economic and cultural marginalisation of the region.

MIGRATION FROM MATABELELAND TO SOUTH AFRICA

Matabeleland predominantly lies in agriculturally marginal and drought prone Region 5. Agricultural production, particularly crop production in this part of the country is largely for subsistence. Even in a good year, very few households are left with surplus produce from which they can obtain income. Since 1991 the region has experienced a series of severe droughts resulting in very low, if any, food production. For many years, a state of disaster has been declared in the regions of Matabeleland because of the serious persistent droughts they experience. Amanor-Wilks and Moyo (1996) state that some drought prone areas such as Zimbabwe's Matabeleland have sustained their populations from migrant incomes derived in South Africa. For example, Hobane (1999) found that 62 per cent of the adult population in one community in Matabeleland South were employed outside the country, mainly in South Africa and Botswana.

The post independence *Gukurahundi* violence which ended with the signing of a unity agreement between the two main parties, the ruling ZANU (PF) and PF-ZAPU contributed significantly to the rise in the rate of out-migration from Matabeleland to neighbouring countries, especially South Africa and Botswana. Maphosa (2004) found evidence of an unprecedented increase in out-migration in the decade between 1981 and 1990 in an area located close to both the South African and Botswana borders with Zimbabwe.

This is the decade of government's military operations in the province, code-named *Gukurahundi*, ostensibly aimed at combating the dissident activities that had broken out in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands provinces which however, turned out to be an excuse for ethnic cleansing. The actual number of

those who were killed, imprisoned, tortured or forced to leave the country and internally displaced is not yet known, as open discussion of these atrocities is still restricted.

A scathing report published by the Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice (1997) on the massacres is the only report that is now in the public domain. A significant number of people who left the country to seek refuge in neighbouring countries ended up working there as undocumented migrants. Young men and women were the main targets of the army's so called counter-insurgency activities in those parts of the country. Former soldiers who were being demobilised from the Zimbabwe National Army would later be hounded, hunted down, arrested, tortured or killed. Many survived by fleeing and finding refuge in other countries as undocumented migrants.

Many of the migrants from Matabeleland are irregular migrants. The methods used to gain illegal entry into South Africa include entering legally through official entry points and then overstaying (Crush 2003; Mudungwe 2005) as well as various ways of entering unofficially. These include crossing through unofficial points and being smuggled through the official border post by human smugglers. Getting proper travel documents in Zimbabwe has not been an easy process especially for people in remote rural areas, including some of the migrant sending areas of Matabeleland. For a long time, Zimbabweans required visas to enter South Africa.

The process, cost and time it took to get a visa were all very prohibitive for poor people. Around 2008 it took at least seven working days for the visa to be processed. The applications were processed at the South African High Commission offices in Harare. To be issued with a tourist visa to South Africa one had to produce evidence of availability of funds in the form of travellers' cheques for R2 000 or USD300, together with certified copies of the cheques. Alternatively one could submit a bank statement from a foreign currency account indicating the availability of enough funds to sustain the applicant while in South Africa.

These requirements were beyond the reach of many ordinary Zimbabweans including those from impoverished areas such as Matabeleland. As observed by Chomutare stringent visa requirements put in place by some countries which are popular destinations for Zimbabwean migrants were the main reason for the high rate of undocumented migration from Zimbabwe to those countries. Chingarande and Maphosa (2007), Beremauro and Siziba also point at strict visa requirements as the main contributor to the high rate of undocumented migration from Zimbabwe. Chomutare asserts that visa policies put in place by some countries of destination make international travel for Zimbabweans 'difficult, precarious and costly'.

As a result of the difficulties in obtaining proper travel documents most people in Matabeleland have travelled to South Africa through *dabulaphu*. Originally *dabulaphu* involved crossing the border through illegal entry points

and walking most or all the way to the destination. Currently the term is in a generalised sense to include all forms of irregular migration which includes being smuggled across the border by *omalayisha* and long distance truck drivers or crossing the border through undesignated areas. This often exposes them to a lot of risks such as being raped, abducted, trafficked or robbed even by those who purport to offer assistants. Stories such as the one presented below are common.

This weekend, in the Johannesburg offices of the Southern African Womens Institute for Migration Affairs (SAWIMA), a South African NGO dedicated to helping distressed migrants, I met three girls from Zimbabwe's second city, Bulawayo. They were still dressed in muddy rags, and sobbed as they told officials what had happened to them during their bid to escape from the Mugabe regime. Two of them, aged 12 and 13, were too upset. But the 15-year-old described graphically how their bid to find a new life in the Republic had gone terribly wrong.

She told me that the three of them had managed to collect half the money demanded by agents in Bulawayo, in return for safe passage over the border, and on to Johannesburg. Her brother, who lives in South Africa, promised to pay the balance once the girls were delivered to him.

The girls were collected by a gang of several men who specialise in this trade in humanity. Their fee, an average for the trip I understand, was 1500 South African Rand. 'When we got over the border,' said the girl, 'they rang my brother on his mobile phone, and he confirmed that he would make the full payment as soon as we arrived. But then the men began to demand we have sex with them. When we tried to resist they beat us, and threatened to abandon us in the bush.

'It was in the night, we had no money, we were so frightened...They all raped us, over and over again...now I think they may have given me HIV.'

A SAWIMA official told me that the girls had been taken to a Johannesburg address and kept as sex slaves for several days, before being finally abandoned on the organisation's doorstep early one morning. The girls are now undergoing medical examination, and attempts are being made to find the 15-year-old's brother.

The official said that almost half of all women who escape illegally from Zimbabwe endure similar experiences, and she believes that many more are killed after being raped, their bodies left in the bush.

'These human traffickers are beasts,' she told me. 'People know this, but they are so desperate they will even risk their lives to come here.'

Back here in Harare the talks on power sharing begin yet again. And while the politicians talk, the rapes, the beatings and the murders continue.

Source: <http://www.zimbabwetoday.co.uk/> (Posted on Tuesday, 28 October 2008)

In November 1998 a group of Zimbabweans travelling through Botswana to South Africa, suffocated and died in an unventilated trailer of a vehicle that was being used to smuggle them into South Africa.

CIRCULATORY MIGRATION: TRANSNATIONALISM OR NOT?

The concept of transnationalism is used to describe a phenomenon in migration trends in which migrants do not sever ties with their home communities but build, maintain and reinforce multiple linkages between home and host countries (Duaney 2002; Glick Schiller et.al. 1992; Glick Schiller et. al. 1995). Vertovec (1999) conceives of transnationalism as involving multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation states. For Portes (1996) transnationalism involves a 'dual existence', because they have an existence that spans national borders.

According to Basch et al. (1984), this dual existence leads to multiple identities as well as multiple involvements. Multiple involvements implies that migrants participate in the social, economic and political lives of all the countries in which they have a 'simultaneous existence'. Multiple therefore implies benefitting from living in more than one country at the same time. Can the experiences of irregular migrants from Matabeleland to South Africa be described as multiple involvements?

Labour migration to South Africa from other countries in the region has always been 'circulatory' (Weyl 1991) or oscillatory (Wilson 1972), with migrants occasionally returning to their homes and families. Weyl (1991) attributes this to the peripherisation and underdevelopment of the labour source regions as a result of the development of the capitalist mode of production in Southern Africa. This mode of production was characterised by uneven development between regions which were linked into one dominant economic system whose centre was the mining and manufacturing areas of South Africa.

The underdeveloped regions became labour reserves whose role was to supply labour to the centres of accumulation. The regions of labour supply were not totally proletarianised but the traditional mode of production was left, albeit in a weakened and modified form. The 'traditional' mode of production was allowed to exist so as to bear the costs of the reproduction of labour by not only reproducing and bringing up children who would eventually migrate to the centres but also by providing subsistence and social security for migrant workers in old age, rest periods or unemployment.

Migration from Matabeleland to South Africa has always been 'circulatory'. There are several explanations for circulatory nature of migration from this area, the most important being the difficulties migrants encounter in trying to integrate into their country of destination. While migration is a route to escape

poverty and alienation from the home country these migrants have found integration into their country of work very difficult or impossible. They experience xenophobia, discrimination and exploitation.

The May 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa are a poignant demonstration of migrants being rejected in their country of work. The feelings of insecurity and exclusion oblige the migrants to maintain links with their communities of origin. Rather than multiple involvements, the experiences of the irregular migrants from Matabeleland to South should be seen as multiple exclusion. This is because of their exclusion from political, economic and social participation from both their country of origin and their country of work.

POLITICAL EXCLUSION

Migrants' political involvement can be through electoral or non-electoral engagement (Itzigsohn and Villacres (2008). Electoral participation involves membership in political parties, financial contributions to campaigns and participation in campaigns and rallies and voting in elections. Non-electoral political participation on the other hand involves membership in Home-Town Associations (HTAs), contributing money for projects in the home country and membership in charity organisations active in the home country. HTA activities ought to be considered political because through them migrants engage with local and regional authorities and influence the design and implementation of local development projects. As a result, HTAs become actors in local development and partners in local politics (Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003).

Migrant political involvement in Matabeleland is very low. This is because the conditions of their existence or the rules put in place by the Zimbabwean state prevent them from political participation. For example, external voting in Zimbabwe is not allowed for both documented and undocumented migrants. This constitutes political exclusion of migrant populations. Such exclusion is even more pronounced among undocumented migrants who cannot easily travel between home and the country of work because of lack of proper travel documents and inability to get days off for that purpose. Time constraints, elaborate processes of registering as a voter and loss of confidence in the electoral processes are serious constraints for migrants to exercise their rights to vote.

Among migrant communities worldwide, home town associations (HTAs) have evolved over time, gradually becoming more and more involved in development issues in their home communities. Hometown associations are a very important channel for transmitting collective funds from migrants to their communities for community projects (Hsu, http://www.princeton.edu/jhsu/writing/remittances_3.doc; Ortiz, http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/confs&class/class/UP/comp00/ch2_report.pdf; van Doorn, www.ilo.org/public/english/

employment/finance.download/remit2.pdf; Orozco, 2000; Taylor and Fletcher, <http://www.precesam.colmex.mx/Volume2-ing.html>). These associations have been effective where they collaborate with local actors such as government, local NGOs and local development associations. The local actors provide a link with the communities and can also complement the efforts of the HTAs. For example in the Mexican state of Zacatecas, each dollar contributed in remittances is matched by three dollars (one from the municipality, one from the state and one from the federal government). Through this programme 400 projects with a total investment value of US\$4.5 billion were completed in eight years (van Doorn, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/atrav/publ/129/8.pdf>). HTAs are better developed in some countries than others.

According to Calgar (2006), this is explained by two major factors namely; the policies of the sending states and the specific qualities of the migrant communities, such as the exit conditions or background characteristics. Policies of the sending states that may promote the existence and impact of hometown association are those that do not only recognise HTAs but also facilitate and support their activities. The exit conditions of migrants refer to whether the migrants are documented or undocumented. Undocumented migrants are unlikely to form strong hometown associations because of the constraints they often encounter in trying to send collective remittances back home. Such constraints exist at both the country of origin and the country of work. There have to be safe and efficient ways of sending remittances. Banking facilities in many rural areas of Matabeleland do not exist. Where they exist, they are poorly developed. The only form of organisation that exists among these migrants are burial societies which are mutual assistance organisations with little potential for meaningful development assistance and no potential at all to fight for change of their conditions (Maphosa 2009; 2011). Despite holding South African passports and identity documents, many migrants do not vote in South Africa. The acquisition of South African documents is mainly for the purposes of travel. They often do not translate into claims associated citizenship such as the right to vote, protection and access to public facilities (Muzondidya 2010).

ECONOMIC EXCLUSION

Transnational economic activities involve participation in economic activities that cut across national boundaries. This includes working in one country and running businesses in another. It might also take the form of operating businesses that operate across borders. As a result of their irregular migrant status, undocumented migrants experience challenges in participating in the economic lives of both the home country and the country of work. The following sections discuss the experiences of undocumented migrants in their

economic involvement in both countries. Businesses belonging to foreigners have been targets of attack in many instances of violence against foreigners in South Africa.

During the May 2008 xenophobic attacks, businesses belonging to foreigners were attacked. Under the headline 'Foreign traders tally losses', The *Pretoria News Business Report* of 22 May 2008 reported the destruction of foreign owned business around the country and observed that; 'Most of them are uninsured and will have to bear the losses or close shop'. As reported by CoRMSA (2009) police have continued to raid the businesses of migrants who depend on informal trading in South African towns and cities. The report states:

Violence against foreign shop owners has been prevalent in many years, with few repercussions for the perpetrators. Unfortunately, migrants entrepreneurs, and shopkeepers in particular, continue to be murdered in informal settlements across the country (CoRMSA Report 2009: 24).

This shows the precarious situation in which businesses owned by foreigners often find themselves in South Africa. In 1998 South Africa street vendors in Johannesburg attacked their foreign counterparts. This created a feeling of insecurity which made South Africa an unsafe environment for foreigners to engage in business ventures. This even included the small vendors on the streets. Some respondents indicated that they were not willing to invest in South Africa for fear of losing their investment through xenophobic motivated violence. Even those with South African documents are discouraged from investing in their country of work by the possibility of arrest and deportation.

Migrants send substantial amounts of money as remittances to their relatives back home. The money does not necessarily produce economic development for the migrants and their relatives left back home (Ballard 2004, in Osella, Maphosa 2004). A large proportion of remittances are used for daily expenses such as food. Health care and school fees also take a large share of the remittances. Remittances are also used to build and improve houses, to buy livestock and consumer goods. A very small proportion of the remittances is saved or used for productive investments.

Remittances are also used for other purposes such as debt repayment, funeral expenses, membership and subscription to burial societies and payment of domestic workers. There is very little investment in productive activities. Businesses run by migrants of micro-scale comprising of general dealer shops, grinding mills and bottle stores or other informal, micro-scale and seasonal income generating activities with very little multiplier effects such as employment creation. Lack of infrastructure, business training, insecurity and low incomes are some of the factors that discourage migrants from investing in business.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In order to survive in the two countries in which they spent their working lives moving between, irregular migrants have to continuously shift and change identities. Identity refers to the sense one has of who they are and of what is important about them. Sources of identity include nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender and class. Traditionally, identities were seen as widely shared within social groups and as based on one or two key variables such as class and nationality (Green 2004). Identities are fluid and changeable. In other words, people actively create their own identities. As stated by Taylor and Spencer (2004) both individual and collective identity is open to continuous reassessment. Within that context, undocumented migrants often have to devise ways to survive which include falsification of documents in order to have access to some of the services that they need.

According to Crush and McDonald (2002: 10) this constitutes hybridisation of identity in which migrants take on a multiplicity of identities that are a combination of host and home. When in South Africa they do not only strive to get the identity documents of that country (which can be obtained fraudulently), they also have to look, talk and in every respect be like the South Africans. Anything that gives away one's identity as not South African usually leads to arrest and deportation or being subjected to various forms of abuse or violence. That is why *injiva*, as these migrants are known back home, acquire characteristics including language, dressing, music, style of walking, mannerisms and even temperament that are unique. These are survival strategies in South Africa. Zimbabweans who speak SiNdebele, a language that is similar to isiZulu, gives the speakers a relative advantage over other Zimbabweans who do not speak the language. According to Muzondidya (2010), however even Nguni speaking Ndebele and Shangaan migrants from Zimbabwe are often not distinguished from the rest of Zimbabweans and are included in the category *makwerekwere* or *kalanga* (foreigners).

CITIZENSHIP, HALF CITIZENS OR NON-CITIZENS

Marshall (1950) identified three elements of citizenship, namely, the civil, the political and social elements. The civil elements of citizenship involve the rights necessary for individual freedom. These constitute individual liberties which include freedom of speech, thought, faith, the right to own property and conclude valid contracts and the right to justice. The political aspects of citizenship have to do with the rights to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body.

Social elements of citizenship range from the right to a degree of economic welfare and security to the right to share in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in a given society. As stated by Fauks (2000), citizenship entails both rights and obligations. What differentiates it most from mere subjecthood is an ethic of participation. Citizenship is an active rather than a passive status. In other words, citizenship is incompatible with domination whether by the state, the family, the husband, the church, the ethnic group or any other force that seeks to deny an individual recognition as an autonomous individual capable of self government. Citizenship, however, does not just confer benefits to an individual. It also involves responsibilities and obligations to others. Citizenship is therefore reciprocal where rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities are given and taken.

Fauks believes that the concept of citizenship entails what Anthony Giddens (1984) calls a 'duality of structure', where the individual and the community cannot accurately be understood as opposed and antagonistic ideas. Instead, individual agency and social practices are mutually dependent. Through exercising rights and obligations, individuals reproduce the necessary conditions for citizenship. Lister (1997) also emphasises citizenship as participation which is an expression of human agency. He argues that as a right, citizenship enables people to act as agents. A citizen is therefore the opposite of a subject.

The relationship between the state and citizens is one which guarantees the enjoyment of certain basic rights. It is also a relationship in which people exercise control over governments directly or indirectly by participating in political activities which include casting votes on specific issues or by electing their representatives. As stated by Baubock (1994) the underlying assumption about citizenship is that of the equality of members of the community. This does not, however, mean lack of differentiation among the members.

Parrenas (2001) has observed that migration results in dislocation which leads to partial citizenship or non-belongingness. This effect of migration is most evident among undocumented migrants that are uprooted from their countries of origin and are not being fully integrated into their countries of work. Being uprooted from their country of origin because of economic, political and social exclusion, undocumented Zimbabwean migrants, particularly those from Matabeleland in South Africa are often faced with the reality of being 'outsiders', through being subjected to various acts of violence, exclusion and exploitation. They are stripped of both political and economic agency in both countries; that is, in Zimbabwe as the country of origin and South Africa their country of work. In their country of work, they are excluded from accesses to social services provisions and participation in civil society. They cannot make claims against the state. As outsiders, they are also unlikely to subscribe to the obligations and duties of 'insiders' (Reitzes and Bam).

In the country of work the state has devised various mechanisms meant to exclude people from other countries such as stringent visa requirements. Even the removal of visas does not afford total inclusion because migrants still need to have valid passports which are difficult to obtain. Labels of exclusion such as 'border jumpers,' 'illegal immigrants' and '*makwerekwere*' are used to justify not only exclusion but also violence against immigrants by locals by categorising them not just as different but as those who live outside the protection of the law and have no rights including the right to life. The May 2008 xenophobic attacks on foreigners that took place in many parts of South Africa provide evidence that many South Africans perceive foreigners as people who fall within the zone of exception. The delayed response of the state in dealing with the attacks after they broke out and the delay in bringing those responsible to book may also suggest that the protection of foreigners had not been a matter of serious concern to the South African state.

According to Mbiba (2004), among the various terms used to describe mobile migrant populations, diaspora is often used to connote marginalisation in both the homeland and the 'host' nations. He asserts that with regard to the original state they are an appendage, often illegitimate or undesirable components of the homeland. To the host nation, they are again undesirable, a marginal component of the community. They may be tolerated only when they are perceived as temporary sojourners who will one day go away.

WEAPONS OF THE WEAK

Mhlanga (2009) warns that the feelings of being dominated, suppressed, excluded and marginalised from various development projects, resource distribution, policy formulation and implementation may cause violent conflict with people questioning national belonging due to lack of involvement. This is one of the possible responses. More often than not, however the oppressed do not respond with violence but apparent submission. The other possible response is for the dominated to internalise and rationalise their situation. Mhlanga refers to this as the 'psychology of oppression' which leads to 'mental warping' (Mhlanga 2009). This denotes a condition in which the oppressed adapts an attitude of acceptance to the oppression.

While migrants, especially undocumented migrants, exist in the zones of exception in both their country of origin and in the country of work, their behaviour does not indicate a fatalistic acquiescence to those conditions. Evidence demonstrates that they resist the state of exception in both the country of origin and the country of work. As observed by Ellermann (2009) however, resistance by those who have been reduced to the state of a bare life rarely amount to collective or organised political action.

Instead, the nature of resistance in the state of exception is individual rather than collective, oriented towards short term rather than systematic change and fought by means that present an indirect rather than direct challenge to the sovereign. This explains the absence of formally organised political action among the migrants. In an increasingly repressive political environment emigrants are labelled traitors, cowards or saboteurs, among other names. Organised political activity by migrants is extremely difficult.

In explaining resistance to the state of exception, Ellerman borrows from James Scott's ideas on how subaltern people resist dominance. In a series of publications which began with studies of peasants in the Kedah state of Malaysia, (Scott 1976, 1985, 1990) provides an alternative explanation of how subaltern groups often respond to dominance to the one provided by the concept of hegemony as used by Antonio Gramsci. Under hegemonic arrangements, domination of the subaltern is not achieved through coercive force but through the creation of a hegemonic culture in which the values of the dominant class become accepted as generalised common sense. As a result, the dominated do not only consent to their being dominated but they actively help to maintain the status quo.

Using rich ethnographic material, Scott demonstrated that the dominated or the weak do resist their state of being dominated. They do that using the 'weapons of the weak' which are the everyday forms of resistance which include passive non-compliance, sabotage, subtle evasion and deception. The activities of the migrants clearly demonstrate that despite their lack of formal or overt political action, they have not consented to domination.

Scott also uses the concept of 'hidden transcript' to describe forms of resistance to domination which are not apparent to the power holders. He contrasts this to the 'public transcript' which involves open forms of resistance to domination. Scott's analysis emphasises the importance of individual peasants as agents and not passive victims of domination. This analysis accords with the theoretical framework of structuration used in here, which also views transnational communities as agents who use various ways to resist domination and exclusion. Migrants use various forms of resistance including smuggling both human smuggling and the smuggling of goods, bribery, fraudulent acquisition of identity documents and using informal routes of crossing the border.

CONCLUSION

Literature on transnationalism has often defined it as involving a simultaneous existence of migrants in more than one country and as such, constituting multiple involvements, which implies participating and benefiting in the social, political and economic lives of the countries in which the migrants have the

simultaneous existence. The argument presented in this chapter is that the notion of multiple involvements does not portray the experiences of migrants from Zimbabwe's Matabeleland region to South Africa.

Instead, their experiences ought to be seen as multiple exclusions. This is because they are excluded from participating fully in their home countries' social, economic and political lives while also being excluded from participating in the country of work. While they are dislocated from their country of origin, integration into the country of work is very difficult. As a result they are neither here nor there. The migrants, however, adopt various survival strategies some of which fall outside the limits of what is legal in order gain access to the resources that they are excluded from in both the country of origin and the country of work.

Colonialism, postcolonial violence and repression

Reflections on the northern question in Uganda

Fredrick Kisekka-Ntale

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a rethinking of a whole range of taken-for-granted categories and concepts in the social sciences. One such concept is boundaries, which has re-emerged as a topic of substantial research. This has mainly been due to the emergence of a counter narrative of a borderless world advanced by the globalisation theory. Although one cannot rightly say that the state model as adopted after the French Revolution has failed in Africa, we see that it has come under serious strain, largely because, on one hand, the concept was alien to Africa, and on the other, pre-independence nation builders failed to come up with acceptable social notions that could serve as a strong foundation for the nation state. Taking the unit of analysis as northern Uganda, the author touches on the re-emerging significance of boundaries (within states) and posits that ethnic borders still play a significant role in ordering of the state in Africa today.

In this chapter the author examines a wave of renewed ethno-nationalism that is growing in the northern region of Uganda, especially in the wake of the two-decade war that has left the northern region ravaged in all sectors of life and lagging behind in all development indicators, including high level of Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/Aquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) prevalence. It is noted that although there exists a large body of literature on northern Uganda, mostly by Western scholars, there is need to re-examine the re-emerging ethno-radicalism/nationalism debate and the implications of its politicisation for the continued existence of the contemporary state of Uganda. In doing so, a postcolonial analytical strategy is pursued within which the author tries to account for the reproduction of postcolonial territorial suspicion and mistrust in Uganda. In addition, the author engages with the normative arguments by modern scholars like Hobsbawn, Gellner and Anderson who tend to sever nations from their ethnic past and /or pre-modern roots.

Clearly Africa's history is replete with stories of war and unending conflict. From Angola to Biafra, Somalia to Sudan, Congo through Chad, the continent

has witnessed a wave of wars that have spanned the second half of the twentieth century and spilled into the twenty-first century. The conflicts in Burundi and the genocide in Rwanda are part of Africa's recent past. On a continent where most of the conflicts are internal, some commentators are already talking about an interstate war deficit in Africa. Former Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda described the continent as 'at crossroads because of its failed economic policies and conflicts arising out of bad leadership'.

It is worth pointing out that Africa's many conflicts have taken an ethnic dimension. Indeed, a number of scholars have blamed Africa's predicament on diversity arising out of ethnocentricism. In Rwanda, the genocide pitted the Hutu against the Tutsi; the Biafra war in Nigeria pitted the Ibo against the federal government, while the war in Sudan was fought mainly by the black south against the Arab north. The Somali conflict on the other hand, pitted the dominant clans against each other in what continues to be one of Africa's most devastating wars. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), various ethnic groups have fought each other for over a decade to control the country's vast resource base. Closer home, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) of Joseph Kony has waged a continuous war against the government of Uganda for over two decades, mainly in response to the coming to power of a southern-led government.

This chapter argues that the colonial policy of appropriating the northern tribes as military labour, and the actions of the postcolonial regimes in Uganda created divisions and stereotypes that have been capitalised on to fuel ethnic conflict in the region. In addition, the policies adopted by various postcolonial governments, especially after 1985, resulted in the marginalisation of the northern Uganda region which ultimately led to grievances that the rebels capitalised on to wage war. The continued manipulation of politicised ethnicity led to an atmosphere of polarity between the north and southern tribes, contributing to an unending conflict in the north and a lacklustre response from the south in terms of working on a peace process. Indeed, my argument is that the civil war in northern Uganda must be understood in the context of Uganda's political history, through examining the legacy of colonialism and the process that led to the creation of an entity called Uganda.

PLACING THE BOUNDARY QUESTION INTO PERSPECTIVE: UGANDA AND NORTHERN UGANDA IN CONTEXT

Located in Eastern Africa, Uganda covers a total area of 93 981 square miles and is gifted by great physical beauty. The country is mostly a plateau ranging from 3 000 to 4 500 feet above sea level, and enjoys the moderating influence of Lake Victoria to moderate temperatures. However, in the northern and north

eastern parts of the country, one finds an arid and semi desert. The people of Uganda are predominately agriculturalists—mainly smallholder peasant farmers, who account for the country's major food and cash crop production. Prior to independence, for administrative reasons the country was divided into 18 districts, mostly conforming to tribal divisions. These were formerly grouped together into four provinces of northern, Eastern Buganda and western. The division was conveniently based on the tribal differentiations, reinforced by the earlier identities as constructed and reinforced by the British overrule.

Generally speaking, Uganda is a country of variations including variation in ethnicity, variation in natural resource bases as well as climatic patterns. For instance in the northern and north-eastern Uganda, one finds the Nilotics who constitute of the Acholi, Langi among others. Apart from the Nilotics there are the Paraniotics (Itesot, Karamojog and Kakwa). The other ethnic groups are the Sudanic comprising of the Madi and Lugbara. In the southern part of the country, one finds the Bantu tribes like the Baganda, Banyoro, Banyakore and Basoga, among others. The climatic conditions between the north and south are different. For instance the southern areas, one finds moderated climatic conditions augmented by more forests, rivers and lakes compared to the north.

As we have earlier noted, because variations in climate, plantation agriculture was rooted in the south with coffee and cotton, and sugar cane as the leading cash crop. Mineral resources such as copper, tin, limestone, phosphates, oil and others are also located in the south. Hence during the colonial era, the south became the base for the colonial administration and industrialisation – serving as the economic backbone for this British colony and postcolonial Uganda. The north, on the other hand, was established as a labour reserve with many of the northern tribes imported into the south to work as labourers on the coffee, cotton and sugar plantations, particularly in the south. With the north being turned into a labour pool, it also supported the much needed function of recruiting base for the military (Gertzel 1974). It must be noted that British deliberately and politically kept the northern tribes in the Army. It is thus little wonder that the northern tribes constituted the largest proportion of the regiments for the King's African Rifles (KAR) and the post independence national army, prison and police forces.

As previously observed much of the political structure in which ethnic groups in present-day Uganda interact is a creation of the British and to a large extent the Berlin Conference of 1884. Similarly, much of the political structure in which ethnic groups in colonial Uganda interacted was a creation of colonial rule as defined by Britain's indirect rule policies. This should not be construed to mean that prior to colonialism there was no ethnic differentiation in Uganda, or in Africa as a continent.

What should be noted is that many of the pre-colonial African states/societies were different and lived independently, often in conflict with their

neighbours; but their level of cooperation and/or conflict was defined as independent and sovereign. By contrast, while suppressing conflict, the colonial powers sought to bring these already independent and different states into a quasi nationbuilding arrangement for their own convenience, and this was hurriedly formalised in the name of decolonisation, bringing together people of varied ethnicities into a single pot, into a new postcolonial state that so often had little to do with pre-colonial historical, linguistic or ethnic reality (Kisekka-Ntale 2007: 426).

Can we assume that it was not anticipated by the decolonising British that such colonial amalgamation created on an ethnicised foundation, characterised by animosity and acrimony was bound to degenerate into further cracks and thus failing national unity especially between the northern and southern tribes? This question is asked in view of the puzzle that makes one wonder why different ethnicities got into a national unification project that was visibly cracked at the onset. The answer to this puzzle lies in a particular colonial notion of seeing a nation as homogeneous and in disregard to the cultural differentiation. This was reinforced by the colonial boundary determination project that made no sense of the existing cultural and ethnic differences.

The blame also lies in the failure for Britain as the former colonising power to re-draw these boundaries at the time of decolonisation. Therefore, it is of essence to argue that, having built an administrative system in the colonial state, it was easier for Britain to hand over Uganda in the way it was at the time of decolonisation, than attempting to re-divide it into culturally and ethnically meaningful units that would now warrant creation of a new administrative system to serve this arrangement. As a result of this, Uganda mirrors the postcolonial maze that is virtually present in every African country; most of the African Countries continue to struggle with a north-south question. It is little wonder therefore that most African countries continue to grapple with ethnic conflicts based on the boundary contradiction presented by the north and south.

The ethnic question in Uganda is not new. It covers all facets of life, which this conflict has in varied ways overtly illuminated. It has in many ways reopened the historical chapters of this country, with many commentaries made to that effect. Gingyera-Pinyewa (1991) is one such commentator. He is at pains to illustrate that the political upheavals since 1966 are a product of diverging ethnic contradictions, structural difficulties and lack of national unity. Therefore, any efforts to solve this conflict should lie in understanding and appreciating this divide, which has produced new ethnic nationalism, such as threats of secession.

In light of the above arguments, one notes that the wave of ethnic nationalism continues to greatly influence internal conflicts, particularly the 22-year civil war in northern Uganda. Internal conflicts manifest themselves in ethnic,

minority or secessionist claims or demands for autonomy or issues of ethnicity mixed with issues of religion (Rupisinge 1989). In the course of Ugandan history, large communities have at one time or other, been forced to flee their homes as a result of ethnic tensions. For instance from 1979 to 2004, about 7million people; that is, about one-third of Uganda's population affected by civil conflict and cattle rustling. The northern Uganda insurrection which has lasted over 22 years also resulted in the displacement of over 1.4 million people and led to the deterioration of rural infrastructure and local government service delivery.

As a result, the north remains one of the poorest regions in Uganda with some of the lowest human development indicators in the country. The 2005/6 national household survey shows that the north has the largest proportion of people living in poverty. The gap between the north and national poverty levels has widened from 17 per cent in 1992 to 30 per cent in 2006, with poverty in the north falling less than in any other region. By the end of 2005, an estimated 1.6 million people had been forced out of their homes in northern and eastern Uganda to live in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps for fear of being attacked or abducted by rebels. In financial terms, the cost of the conflict to the national economy has been estimated at over 1.3bnUS Dollars between 1986 and 2002, more than 3 per cent of the country's GDP. Moreover, parts of the region have been affected by cattle rustlers.

What accounts for these events, and how have they accumulated over time to a point of civil war? In the subsequent section the author endeavours to locate this in a rather historical perspective. To this we now turn our attention.

COLONIAL POLICIES AND THE NORTHERN UGANDA QUESTION

In his articulation of the state in contemporary Africa, Mamdani (1996) highlights the importance of revisiting the historical fact that the state in Africa today was forged in the course of colonial occupation. Mamdani elucidates on the elaborate plan to contain a free peasantry, through the implementation of the system of indirect rule, supported by a system of separate but subordinate structure for natives (1996: 62). In effect, indirect rule produced a variegated state based on the power of the central states and the native authorities. In that regard when the British set up the Uganda protectorate in 1894, it was important to design ways of supporting the colonial state. In effect it was necessary to generate taxes that would support both colonial administration and the development of the new state. However, Atkinson (2010) observes that prior to and during colonialism Northern Uganda was viewed as marginal, particularly because of its dry and sparse population. Nonetheless even though northerners were considered marginal and inferior – particularly the Acholi – they were gradually incorporated into the political economy.

The lower perception accorded to the northern stemmed from the fact that the British policy in the 1890s was to confine the Protectorate to Buganda alone and only deal with other inhabitants to the extent that they could maintain friendly relations (Dwyer 1972, quoted in Atkinson 2010). But the year 1902 saw a shift in policy, by bringing the north into the British fold. Cotton growing was introduced and subsequently more taxes were levied. But according to the first Acholi District commissioner P.J.R. Postlethwaite, paying taxes and growing of cash crops were secondary in significance. The primary role of the population in northern Uganda, particularly the Acholi was to provide recruits for the police, the army or migrant labour for the populous and more developed south (Atkinson 2010: 6). The relegation of the northern tribes to the military and labour-camps emphasises the colonial tribal categorisation as well as the exclusivist approach to cultures and identities in Uganda. These were often exaggerated and even reinforced by the southern-lying tribes, a situation that further exacerbated the marginalisation of the northern lying tribes.

It is worth noting that the British saw the north as a problem area. They described it as a disturbed, hostile territory, likely to put up resistance against occupation. They therefore sought to occupy the north as a means of securing the south. The Northern Garrison took control of the north, in an arrangement where tribes had no say. After World War 1, the British sought a divide and rule policy to pacify the north by pitting the Nubians to carry out punitive expeditions against the Langi, the Banyoro and the Baganda. British military recruitment also became focused on this region, with large numbers of Langi and Acholi being recruited by offering inducements to the chiefs who were paid 3 Rupees for each Acholi recruit. In the 1950s, large numbers of recruits also came from Lango and Teso.

The prime example of the colonial policy of divide and rule was to develop the south into cash crop areas, leaving the north undeveloped to serve as a labour reserve. This created vast discrepancies of wealth, and consequently, power fell along the ethnic lines interest in the north-south divide. The greater wealth in the south meant that the southern Bantu also had greater opportunities for education, dominating the colonial civil service; a situation the northerners clearly envied. At independence however, the situation was that while economic and social power lay with the southern Bantu, political and military power lay in the north. This compromise has come to define the post independence politics of the country. Mention has to be made here that in the process of imposing colonial rule, the inclusion of Acholi, Karamoja, Lango and west Nile in the Uganda protectorate was to secure the territory in the kingdom areas, and the north came in as an afterthought in an effort to control the Nile valley.

In effect, British colonial rule in Uganda left a typically complex legacy regarding longer term prospects for economic and political development. Lwanga

(1989) notes that the manner in which 'protection' was effected, the nature of administration established and the colonial economy imposed – were basic elements of the recipe for the chaos created in the postcolonial period. The north was characterised as a military and labour recruiting ground. Branch (2010) has clearly noted that setting up of the Acholi petty bourgeoisie further demonstrates the colonial approach to northern Uganda. He notes that from the 1930s, the British discouraged cash crop farming in Gulu and Chua districts, preferring to use the area as a labour reserve for the large farms of the south and for the armed forces. Efforts to reverse this in the 1930s and 1940s due to the influx of the migrants from the Congo, Burundi and Rwanda did not help matters as certain factors conspired to prevent the development of a meaningful cash crop economy in the north (2010: 49). This led to a deliberate division of the country into productive and non productive regions. Labour from the north was essential for carrying out essential services in the central producing districts.

The denial to northern Uganda of opportunities for social advancement equal to those the colonial administration chose to bestow upon the protectorate made that region distinctively backward even by Ugandan standards, and the full cost of that neglect had to be paid, not by the colonial officials, but by Ugandans themselves (Karugire 1980:141). Using data from the civil service, Branch points out that by 1963 there were a total of 445 African traders, versus 7 074 teachers and civil savants in Acholiland out of a total population of 340 000. Branch argues that without education, the Acholi needed to join the civil service and those who did not want to farm joined the army. In essence Branch is at pains to wholesomely accept the narrative of colonial marginalisation of the north and therefore deconstructs the same. He points out that in effect the Acholi ended up being over represented in both the civil service and the armed forces and were second only to the Baganda in terms of their representation in the civil service. Branch also adds that northerners, particularly the Acholi ended up being over-represented in the forces and played a significant role in putting down rebellions in the south (2010: 46).

While Branch's articulations are valid, it is important to look at the broader picture, in terms of wider regional and national outcomes and outputs during and after colonialism. For instance we need to ask ourselves; what category of employees the Acholi and the northerner as a people constituted in the colonial civil service? Certainly not the high calibre employees. This is made clear by the fact that by 1955, the north had less than five schools at the level of Junior Two and only one school at the level of Form Four and that was Sir Samuel Baker. This cannot be compared to the over 40 secondary schools found in the south. Again following the colonial policy of restricted movement, it is possible that fewer people in northern Uganda were able to access secondary education in other regions particularly in the south.

Indeed in 1955 the people of the northern Province reiterated their despondency regarding the imbalance in treatment and the colonial unfairness towards them. They informed the then colonial Governor, Sir Andrew Cohen that they did not see any meaningful infrastructural development in their province in spite of their contributions in the forces (*The Uganda Argus*, 10 March 1955). In his response the Governor noted the contribution of the people of northern Uganda to the police and the army and admitted that the region had produced too few doctors and agricultural officers. But he hastened to mention that there were many people of all races who needed assistance, roughening up a veiled statement in response to the civil defiance the Baganda had demonstrated in response to the deportation of their King-Mutesa II (*The Uganda Argus*, 10 March 1955). The people of the Northern Province also continued playing this role in the postcolonial period, a role which significantly contributed to the ethnic divide especially after 1966. This in itself reinforces the southerners' negative perceptions of the north.

Without a doubt the British authorities enforced images of the usefulness, productivity and suitability of the people of each region, leading to ethnic based labels and stereotypes that persist even today. It is worth arguing that the north and southern tribes were organised in a radically different way before colonial encounters took place. While the south, especially Buganda had a monarchy with a centralised administrative system, the northern tribes were cephalous societies. Whether this system contributed to this ethnic distrust is not something to wholly explore here, it is safe to say that the colonial system of exclusion imposed on the north, led to its isolation from the south. The side of the country after Karuma falls was considered as 'alien territory' and therefore not perceived to be 'Ugandan enough'. Moreover, the Baganda in the south were rewarded generously for their cooperation with the British, with the capital, parliament, university and principal hospital and the best infrastructure situated in the heart of Buganda.

In their thinking, the colonisers deemed that the tribes of the north 'were so primitive that they would provide more interest to the anthropologist than to the administrator' and that their tribal and administrative organisation have not yet 'advanced to the stage requiring the creation of centralised native executives.' In that way, the north was systematically denied opportunities for social advancement because 'its the stage of development was not yet of order to make full use of such facilities' (Karugire 1983). In their recruitment policy, the martial tribes of the north were selectively recruited so that they could man security in the south. It is in light of such imbalances and attendant discontent that laid the ground for postcolonial animosity and acrimony.

Moreover the postcolonial repressive regimes led mainly by northerners only served to escalate the north-south divide of the country. Extra-judicial killings were summarily carried out, leaving a number of southerners reeling

for revenge. In effect in the post independence period, ethnic recruitment also undermined public acceptance of the military and hurt the security system and government itself. What is more, securing the army for economic gains continued to be the basis of governments that followed after independence. In fact as Karlstrom (2004 quoted in Finnstrom 2008) noted that, it is this kind of politics that became Uganda's post independence curse, or put in other words – the postcolonial nightmare. We now turn our attention to this.

FROM INDEPENDENCE TO 1986

Following Uganda's independence in 1962, the British handed the instruments of power to Milton Obote (as Prime-Minister), a northerner from Lango, with the king of Buganda Mutesa II, as president in what was dubbed an 'unholy' alliance between the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and Kabaka Yekka (KY). The alliance between KY and UPC was characterised by deep-rooted factional politics. In a move to weaken the Kingdom of Buganda and a number of opponents, Obote went ahead to manipulate the party constitution to increase the number of seats of members from regions such as Busoga. This was done to eliminate the then powerful party secretary Kakonge, a Muganda who was both ambitious and calculative. Through threats and monetary rewards, he also got a number of members to cross from the Democratic Party to give UPC a boost in numbers.

The struggles between the UPC and KY became as intense, with Obote as prime minister having an upper hand in ownership of the instruments of violence. Through the control of parliament and the military, Obote's government instituted a violent regime that saw harassment of ordinary people. The Nakulabye incident, where several ordinary people were shot dead by the police on 10 November 1964 was one of those where anti-Baganda sentiments were highly expressed.

Military impunity was promoted from as far back as 1962. Amnesty International re-counts 'In 1962, shortly before Uganda's independence, Idi Amin of the King's African Rifles (KAR) commanded a platoon which killed a number of Turkana prisoners in North Western Kenya. Sir Walter Coutts, the British Governor of Uganda, vetoed any criminal proceedings against him on the grounds that he was one of only two black officers on the Ugandan Army and a prosecution would be politically undesirable just before independence. Omara points out that:

'The African sector of the Army was not very representative of the ethnic composition of the country as a whole. The largest contingent was recruited from the north, especially from the people of Acholi. By 1914, Acholi had become the

main recruiting ground for KAR, a pattern that continued in the post-colonial period’.

These events culminated into the abrogation of the 1962 independence Constitution, replacing it with the pigeonhole Constitution of 1967. This was the first major institutionalisation of violence in postcolonial Uganda. The incident, which many people viewed as politically motivated and aimed at a specific section of society, marked a major application of political violence in independent Uganda. Ugandans viewed this as a tribal struggle but it was also an instrument that gave it legitimacy. In the years following the 1967 abrogation of the Constitution, a number of constitutional changes were implemented by the Obote government. What should be noted is that these were mainly administrative changes, and did not result in many changes in the wealth distribution of regions. Obote moved to curb the power of Buganda by abolishing the monarchy. The Baganda bayed for his blood and waited for their turn for revenge.

It is important to ask, why did Obote pursue this kind of politics in post independent Uganda? The most important rationale that seems to have pre-occupied the new prime-minister is the intent to rectify the wrongs that had been made by the colonial state, that of inequality propped across the various regional divides in the country. For instance, it is noted that, after the signing of the famous Buganda Agreement of 1900, the socio-economic and political policies that were introduced by indirect rule led to prominence of tribal and ethnic categories. As a result, the 1900 agreement created a ‘very strong and unique Buganda Kingdom’ in the south, as a model of British administration in Uganda. This agreement also framed the Baganda in the south as a superior group compared to their northern counterparts.

This differentiation was further underlined by the introduction of the cash crop economy and a kind of superior’s class system in the south that also acted as the home for the elite beauraucracy during and after the colonialism. This was equally institutionalised in 1962 with the promulgation of the Constitution that created administrative units on fundamentally unequal terms. In that regard, of the above, the need for an equalisation project became Obote’s post independence pre-occupation.

This school of thought is well sustained by Branch. He notes that there were 10 federal districts, concentrated in the north and south. Four of the kingdoms were given some autonomy over their internal affairs whereas Buganda was given a wide range of exclusive powers. For this reason tribal equalisation meant very different things in the north, where it appeared to be a guarantee of equality before the central state and the south where it appeared to be an attack on constitutionally fundamental rights. But undertaking this tribal equalisation implied undoing the colonial legacy, meaning undermining the privileges of the treaty kingdoms particularly Buganda (2010: 54).

In light of the above, the author argues the events that followed in 1966; hardly five years after independence are a demonstration of the ethnic and/or regional rationalisation and also reveal the divide to which the country had been reduced to. These events and their subsequent effects have also remained the hallmark of contemporary ethnic tension, particularly between north and south, and have aggravated the prevalent hate and mistrust between the northerners and southerners. For instance, in a key informant discussion with one of the keen followers of the events preceeding the 1966 crisis, it emerged that Obote exploited the historical divide between north and south to rally support for the attack on the Baganda. It is narrated that Obote informed his henchmen that the Baganda wanted to continue with the imperialist tendencies of making northerners to labour in the south. In one such labour project, he argued was the extension of the Kabaka's palace which needed labourers to carry construction materials and also undertake odd jobs during the construction. In that regard the recruitment of the northerners was seen as an effective way to operationalise the project. This is one among the justifications that Obote raised in his bid to attack the Buganda King's Palace or *Lubiri*. It therefore follows that the politics of north-variations found relevance in post independent Uganda and has continued to be a useful resource in the articulation of skewed political positions in Uganda. This has served to work to the national conscious patriotic project.

The period between 1966 and 1986 saw the northern tribes hold the reigns of power but has been largely defined as a reign of bloodshed and instability in a country that was once called the 'Pearl of Africa' by the former British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill. In that regard, the 'revolution' that took place from 1980 to 1986 has in many ways been described as an ethnic revolution against the northern tribes, or a second rationalisation project. It aimed at overthrowing the northern Nilotic tribes and it is little wonder that it received overwhelming support from the southerners, particularly the Baganda.

To many a northerner, the victory of the then rebel outfit, the National Resistance Army (NRA) was a victory of the southerners against the northerners. One can also argue that the war erupted as response to the radical effort to restore democracy and effect democratic change, in particular. The promise of democracy to the southerners, including the promise of equal opportunities encouraged the ethnicisation of the conflict. This eventually provoked vehement power struggles for state resources hence giving rise to the ethnicisation of political communication during and after the war (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2001). Indeed the same became the major rallying point during the northern war and defined the rationale for the secessionist debate that faceted the war.

Mutiibwa points out that this push for revenge was the result of anger, hatred and bitterness that had polarised the country along ethnic lines. Indeed when the NRA/National Resistance Movement (NRM) went to the bush, they

capitalised on the north-south divide to rally their forces and the peasants in Buganda by arguing that they were fighting against the northerners who were out to annihilate the south. By painting the whole society of northerners as murderous and having cruel intentions against the southerners, they were able to recruit but also gather wide spread support in the central region, while at the same time entrenching tribal hatred against the north. The culture of impunity that had been created by colonial governments, and enforced by post independence regimes led by northerners, made the army an instrument that could be used by various power brokers to gain access to national resources and to also hunt down political opponents. Periods of unrest, resulting out of various coups created a cycle of violence that informs the solution in Northern Uganda.

Thomas Ofcansky (1996) asserts 'the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) conducted its operation, with little regard to the rules of warfare. As a result, terrible human rights abuses occurred against pro-NRA communities in the Luweero Triangle. In January 1983, Obote launched 'Operation Bonanza' in Luwero, during which UNLA troops destroyed small towns, villages and farms, and killed or displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians. After the war ended in 1986, the International Committee of the Red Cross claimed that at least 300000 people had died in the Luweero Triangle and that officials had failed to account for half to a third of the region's tabulation.

It is no wonder therefore that when the southern-led NRM government captured power in 1986, various factions in the north would seek to regain power. Although significant inroads were made, particularly in the early years of the NRM to integrate the country and reduce the North South divide, stark divisions continued, especially in the progressive years of the regime until today. The NRM years have seen an exacerbation in the disparity of development indicators between the north and south, symptomatic of neglect which has resulted into further rebellion. Although relative calm has returned to the region, the north is in a dire state and the vulnerability of the population is at its worst.

The situation began to change drastically in 1987; there was peace process between the Uganda Peoples' Democratic Army (UPDA) and the government, the emergence of Joseph Kony and the intensification of cattle raids by Karamojong and government soldiers. Between 1988 and 1994, the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) acquired an international dimension. Through purchase of sophisticated weaponry, they were able to wreck havoc among the population and transformed a ragtag group into credible challengers to government.

It is worth mentioning that upon capturing power in 1986, the Museveni regime began consolidating its gains in the south by instituting a local administrative system that went down to the village levels. In the North however, vendettas against remnants of previous regimes had to be settled. The Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda (FEDEMU) division of the NRM), a rebel group mainly composed of Baganda, is said to have committed revenge killings

in Acholi following the defeat of the UNLA. This followed mainly because Tito Okello, an Acholi, was the mediate president who preceded the NRM's rise to power. Out of such circumstances, fear and uncertainty were created, and armed mobilisation was resorted to as a way of defence but also trying to re-capture power.

In addition, when the NRM took power, there was wide spread fear of retribution, and this fear materialised when UNLA soldiers were ordered to report back to the barracks. The impression was that they would be killed, first as Amin had done to the Langi soldiers. When this happened, most UNLA soldiers fled to Sudan, while others organised to fight back. Movements like the Holy Spirit movement of Alice Lakwena, Odongo Latek's Uganda People's democratic army and the infamous Lord's Resistance Army sprouted. These mobilised popular support by appealing to ethnic anxieties about revenge, although they later squandered it by turning on the population through mass killings and abductions.

Their recruitment was eased through the mass murders that NRA soldiers were committing in the name of revenge for 'the Luweero skulls.' Many youths fled into forming rebel groups as a way of defending their territory. Perhaps also in retaliation for Obote's reference to 'a good Muganda is a dead one'. The southern tribes saw the Acholi as better off dead. What followed was an era of insurgency that ultimately led to the birth of the most notorious group that operated in the North up until 2009, the Lord's Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony. The Kony rebels have carried out notorious massacres and displaced over a million people from their homeland.

THE NORTHERN UGANDA CONFLICT IN CONTEXT

There have been mainly three phases of the conflict in Northern Uganda. The war waged by the overthrow UNLA soldiers and the rebel group UPDA from 1986 to 1988. The second was the Holy Spirit Movement led by Alice Auma Lakwena which was mainly a peasant rebellion, and finally the transformation of the Holy Spirit Movement into the Lord's Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony. The metamorphosis of these rebellions has been attributed to a number of factors. Some point out that the NRM/A's policy of retribution in the north caused mistrust between northerners and southerners, who then went on to attempt to overthrow the government of president Museveni. Moreover, the legacy of military rule created conditions where rebellions became the basis for accessing political power, and it is not surprising that the rebels, who mistrusted the new government, would resort to it.

The northerners also felt a sense of discrimination and indignity that were a result of slow developments in the area. While massive developments had taken

place in the south, very little effort had been put into developing the north, and now that their tribesmen were not in power, the northerners had a sense of loss, and wanted the power back so as to increase their share in national development. Moreover, the wide spread militarisation of the north, right from colonial recruitment through to postcolonial governments created a sense that the northerners had created a niche for themselves in the army, and now that the southerners had captured power, that niche had been disintegrated, and this anxiety can partly account for the continued rebellions.

Matters were not helped when developments in Sudan took advantage of the situation. Suspecting that the NRM was arming the SPLA, the Sudanese government started arming the Kony rebels and the war raged on both borders. This scenario complicated the dynamics of the war, and internationalised it, making resolution more untenable. In an attempt to 'flush out' the rebels, the government of Uganda, with support from the United States (US), carried out 'Operation Iron Fist' which, instead of stopping rebellion, fuelled massive killings by the LRA.

THE WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

For nearly two decades, the international community ignored the plight of the people in northern Uganda to increasingly grave repercussions. In late 2003, the north found itself re-designated as an area with one of the worst humanitarian crises following the visit of the UN Under Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland. Since then there has been an influx of humanitarian agencies, many of whom describe their activities as 'protection oriented'. This reflects increased international awareness of the rights dimensions of external intervention (Dolan 2005). Interestingly, this dimension of international awareness was also opportunistically exploited by both the Kampala regime and the LRA rebels. For as Branch (2005) observed, on the international level, the continuation of the war has provided the means through which Museveni re-invented himself, especially in the wake of 9/11, as America's key ally in the region. Museveni has since continued to be a great recipient of significant American military aid and diplomatic support for his own 'war on terror' against the LRA in exchange for serving as a conduit to the SPLA in Southern Sudan, the front line in the American 'war on terror' against the Khartoum government. Additionally, Museveni has managed to dodge donor demands to reduce the military budget by citing the presence of the war in the north – even while much of the foreign aid, including military aid, had been diverted to the Ugandan invasion and militarisation of eastern Congo. The donors for their part, not wanting to damage Uganda's reputation as a 'model of democracy and development,' conveniently ignored the conflict (2005:3).

On their part, the rebels viewed this international intervention as a partial effort in support of the Kampala regime by the international community and neglect of the political legitimacy and ideals of the LRA. Matters were made worse when the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor officially opened an investigation in response to the referral in July 2004, and in October 2005 the ICC unsealed arrest warrants, its first warrants in its historic first case, charging five of the top commanders of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) with war crimes and crimes against humanity. In effect this negatively impacted on the achievement of peace. Therefore the ICC indictment raised LRA suspicion even during the peace process between the LRA and the Government of Uganda. Indeed, as Branch (2007) has argued the Ugandan case makes the importance of timing clear. The ICC should avoid intervening into ongoing conflicts, since the instrumentalisation of ICC intervention by states may lead to further militarisation and violence (2007:195).

In *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda, 1986 to 2006*, Chris Dolan challenges the standard characterisation of the situation in northern Uganda as a civil war between a ragtag band of rebels seeking to rule the country according to the biblical Ten Commandments, and Yoweri Museveni's government in Kampala, trying in vain to eradicate them. Dolan posits that there is no war in northern Uganda. Rather, the situation there is one of 'social torture' in which the Acholi people have for decades been subject to systemic torture through their enforced dependency on a protection system that is itself a primary source of violations. Such violations – of rights to a livelihood, to education and to healthcare and of physical and psychological well-being, among others – have subordinated a population that might otherwise represent a threat to Museveni's hegemony, and have provided populations on the verge of dissent with a powerful warning.

Dolan (2005) thus provides a convincing answer to the question of why the government of Uganda has been ostensibly unable to eliminate the LRA, ending the conflict is not in its interests. The lack of a social contract between the government of Uganda and the citizens in northern Uganda arguably informs the tendency to deal with the high levels of chronic poverty in that region through piecemeal social funds that are further diluted by the politics of patronage. Dolan argues that the greatest problem with the Ugandan government when it comes to the problem of IDPs is 'denial'. Despite the high number of IDPs, in some cases, they blame the IDPs for their predicament, accusing them of complicity in their own suffering. This is why the national IDP policy came more than 10 years after the government first began forcefully herding people into the camps in northern Uganda. Ninety-seven per cent of all war related deaths are attributed to the inhuman conditions in the camps.

Indeed, northern Uganda has been the scene of a mass population movement out of traditional villages and into highly congested, disease-ridden and

poorly managed displacement camps. This movement, prompted by the violent conflict between the LRA and the government army, the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF), has left the countryside of northern Uganda barren. Raids, population movement and access restrictions have destroyed the livestock and agriculture on which the traditional economy was based. Peoples' ability to earn adequate incomes to pay for education, health care and household necessities and to expand business activities has become severely constrained. As a result, the population has become reliant on donor aid.

During the 20-year insurgency, more than 20 000 children were abducted and brutalised by the LRA. Some more 40 000 children have had to trek several hours each night to sleep in the streets of Gulu and Kitgum districts. These came to be known as 'night commuters'. Specifically, Gulu Kitgum and Pader districts were the most affected by armed insurgency as 90 per cent of the population (nearly 2 million people) had been relocated to IDP camps since 1986. The instability resulted in mass abductions, conscription and coercions of countless adult and children into rebel ranks, destruction of homes, lives and general socio-economic activities. An entire society's way of life has been systematically destroyed, physically, socially, culturally and economically. In the camps, the population has lived in abominable conditions, defined by staggering levels of squalor, disease and death, humiliation and despair, appalling sanitation and hygiene, and massive overcrowding and malnutrition.

Following years of conflict, where children were massively abducted and women raped and mutilated, a number of good will organisations started to seek support for peaceful negotiations. Organisations like Kacoke Madit (Big meeting) were one such, and this was complimented by the formation of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI), which served to give a new face to peace negotiations. It is necessary to provide a short brief here about ARLPI, for two reasons; one, because they reframed the conflict from the north, to give it a face in the south, and called on all Ugandans to seek for peace for 'their brothers in the north'. Second, they rigorously engaged with both the government and the rebels, and were instrumental in getting the government to sit at table with rebels for serious talks. It is to ARLPI that our attention, first to help us understand the dynamics of the war, but also to understand the processes through which relative calm has been restored to the region.

TOWARDS PEACE BUILDING: THE CASE OF ARLPI AND NORTHERN UGANDA

Appleby (1996) notes that religion is a source not only of intolerance, human rights violations and extremist violence, but also of non-violent transformation, the defence of human rights, integrity in government and reconciliation and stability in divided societies. Smock (2008) goes further and asserts that

religious leaders and organisations offer credibility as trusted institutions; a respected set of values, moral warrants to oppose injustice, unique leverage for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties; capability to mobilise community and a sense of calling that often inspires perseverance in the face of major and otherwise debilitating obstacles. This is indeed what is reflected in ARLPI and its activities in northern Uganda. As noted by Kisekka-Ntale 2010), 'it can be said that all peace activities in the sub-region are overshadowed and at the same time strengthened by the ARLPI'. The rise of the ARLPI is in direct response to the atrocities committed on the people in northern Uganda by the LRA but also the weak response to real peace from the government of Uganda. In interviews conducted in 2010, the founders of the organisation intimated that this initiative was born out of the desire to achieve lasting peace in the region, as the following discussions with key informants will show.

The interfaith initiatives for peace started in one district, Kitgum, were well received by the church hierarchy at the national level, and subsequently then formalised at regional/diocese level, and finally reproduced in every district and at the parish-level. Both Monsignor (Msgr.) Mathew Ojara and Right. Reverend. Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola report that this Initiative was borne out of the suffering of people due to the LRA incursion in northern Uganda. According to Rt. Rev. Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola, it was a result of a massacre which happened in Lamwo County in Kitgum District. The LRA massacred over 400 people in 3 days.

Following this attack, people in Limo were displaced to Kitgum town and the neighbouring sub-counties. Religious leaders, Protestants, Catholics and Muslims had to unite because they could not afford to work separately, with Catholics praying for Catholics and Anglicans praying for Anglicans, and so forth. According to Msgr. Mathew Ojara, it was more effective and would have greater impact if all the religious groups worked together towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict, that is, a unified approach was the most ideal thing. The four main religious denominations, Roman Catholics, Anglican Church, Islam and Orthodox, converged for joint prayer in Kitgum.

Following the joint prayer, pastoral letters were written to the affected communities, Government of Uganda, the LRA and the international community, appealing to the LRA to stop killing people; government to talk peace; and community to give humanitarian support and accept the victims as well as the perpetrators. In August 1997, this joint action transformed into the Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (RLPI) in Kitgum, proposed by Rt. Rev. Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola Anglican Church, Father. Carlos Rodriguez and Msgr. Mathew Ojara from the Roman Catholic church.

When religious leaders in Kampala heard of this initiative and the joint prayer which took place in Kitgum, they invited the team. A joint prayer for all the four main denominations was held at the Constitutional Square in

Kampala. In 1998, religious leaders in Gulu invited the Kitgum team behind the initiative, and suggested change of name to Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) so as to have a broader impact across the spatial landscape of the Acholi region which had witnessed a uniform wave of unrest. The Gulu-based Bishop, Nelson Onono Onweng from the Anglican Church, became the first chairman of the ARLPI according to the key informant interview with Rt. Rev. Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola. It is worth noting that ARLPI has worked with other local organisations, for example Ker Kwaro.

Both Ker Kwaro Acholi and ARLPI have sought to counteract Kony's claims to religious authority. They have gone on radio programmes to invite LRA fighters to escape from the rebel army and return home, and they have helped mediate peace processes. With the support of their communities, they have conducted traditional and religious ceremonies to cleanse villages where death has occurred and to help reintegrate former LRA fighters back into their communities. Clearing the path for national reconciliation and investment in the region, such initiatives have been crucial in countering Uganda's cycle of violence and developing a true culture of peace (Poffenberger and Presley; 2009).

Such initiatives have been carried out with success in other areas of East Africa. The Catholic Church, for instance, has been instrumental in peacemaking, promotion of constructive dialogues, at all levels, among parties involved in violent conflicts in the region. This role is often played out quietly, informally (e.g. in Burundi), and sometimes officially with Archbishop Monsengwo being appointed president of National Sovereign Conference in DRC in the 1990s and a priest headed the National Electoral Commission in 2005 elections. At regional level, through the structures of justice and peace commissions, the Church in the Great Lakes region, has engaged communities from neighbouring dioceses in prejudices reduction encounters, and opened up for more cooperation between Congolese.

In 2004, ARLPI's efforts translated into the meeting between the LRA and Betty Bigombe, a Government representative, in Palabek, Kitgum. This was followed by peace negotiations in the years that followed. In fact it can be argued that the Juba Peace process had this as its launch pad. As a matter of fact, the formation of the peace negotiation framework, particularly the constitution of the arbitration team was the initiative's origins. The initiative, on its own behalf but with government approval made trips to Garamba, where the LRA periodically camped, for purposes of persuading Joseph Kony, the LRA leader, to be part of the peace agreement and to assure him of government and community commitment towards the agreement according to a key informant interview with Msgr. Matthew Ojara. ARLPI activities were not without hiccups. Several disagreements between the ARLPI and the government took place, with some of the leadership arrested by government on suspicion of being rebel collaborators. This created tension between government and the religious groups and

also threatened the peace process. Such events however are not unique to northern Uganda but also happen in other conflict areas.

ARLPI also worked with peace teams set out by district councils, originally to monitor activities of NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBO) which have been quietly accused of sympathising with the rebels. Later on, with the political opposition gaining strength in the local councils, these District peace teams have had a more mobilising role. Gulu, District Reconciliation and Peace Team (DRPT), Kitgum Joint Forum for Peace (KJFP), Pader Peace Forum (PPF) and Amuru District Reconciliation and Peace Team (ADRPT), were conceived by the district councils to coordinate the activities of all organisations engaged in peace building. For instance Gulu DRPT was established by the District Council in 2002. Only in Gulu they have managed to receive small grants from donors such as the EU where some of the money was awarded to ARLPI. These teams have been weakened, above all the one in Kitgum because they have been publicly labeled 'rebel sympathisers', and thus not eligible for donor support according to the Uganda NGO Act of 2006.

Religious leaders also form part and parcel of government arenas or platforms aimed at peace-building. It is not surprising that religious leaders are, for instance, part of the Gulu District Council initiated quarterly Community Dialogue Meeting at sub-county levels. They involve different groups, that is, representatives of the police, UPDF, representatives of the civil service, among others. Msgr. Mathew Ojara reports that in Kitgum, ARLPI took part in call-in radio talk shows on which panellists responding to community probes are a selection of the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), religious leaders, among others. At an even lower level, five of the eight community groups interviewed reported that local leaders organise security meetings, and the clergy are simply invited. They are specific meetings attended by a selected few. In these localities, there are also political forums, that is, dominantly general village meetings, for which attendance is by choice and thus all may attend. (Security is a key issue in peace-building activities involving visits to less pacified zones.)

Such efforts reflect an internally generated need to find solutions to a conflict that has roots in Uganda's fragmented colonial culture. The conflict itself is indicative of the darkness that colonial rule imprinted on the nation through its divide and rule policy. However, inclusive interfaith initiatives, while working for peace in northern Uganda, have also been very important in bridging the divide in attitude between north and south. We can actually argue that religion, itself a colonial imposition, has been instrumental in playing a corrective role for the north-south divide in Uganda.

CONCLUSION

We note that following the above postulations, it is noticeable that ethnically divided societies like Uganda are prone to conflicts. This can prove to be a real challenge for nation building and political stability. Just as we have earlier seen, the demands usually raised by the various ethnic groups put a great constrain nationbuilding processes. It is broadly acknowledged, at the same time, that the building of a united nation and stable democracy cannot be achieved without making provisions to transform ethnic conflicts and safeguard peaceful co-existence between dominant majorities and contesting groups' demands. And yet a failure to harmonise these divergent view points as well as perceptions can always lead to separatism and calls for secession if partial autonomy is not granted.

Although territorial division carried out on ethnic lines has been advanced as a solution such as in Ethiopia, it can aggravate the ethnic tension within the state. The question that follows then is of how achieve effective the state unity and stability. Is it through ethnic federalism? Is it through establishment of a cultural autonomy? Is it through establishment of a concordance or is it through effective local representation? All these enumerated frameworks can help in reducing the potential for conflict and continued marginalisation, but whichever institutional model is undertaken it has to work towards the creation of strong cohesion of internal groups.

Ethnicity, conflicts, and the rise of militia groups in Nigeria

Godwin A. Vaaseh

INTRODUCTION

At the attainment of political independence in 1960, Nigeria was divided into three main regions by the British colonial administration, representing the major ethnic groups, thus laying the foundation for ethnic politics and conflicts in the country. These different regions, led by their dominant ethnic groups – Hausa/Fulani in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Igbo in the east – perceived one another with mistrust and suspicion. This meant that the ugly emblems of ethnicity and conflicts were sown right from the birth of the Nigerian nation. The amalgamation of the northern and the southern Nigeria in 1914, by Lord Lugard, brought the separatist leaders of the regions into a marriage of convenience. During the first republic, the regions were drawn into a dangerous game of ethnic politics that easily deteriorated and culminated in the 1966 coup and counter coup d'état, which led to the Nigerian civil war of 1967 to 1970.

It is against this background that one can look at the present spate of violence in the Nigerian polity, especially within the context of the present democratic experience. This has provided the impetus for the sharpening of communal identities and conflicts, which have manifested in conflicts between 'indigenous' ethnic groups and 'settler' ethnic groups. As a result of the politics of ethnicity, Nigerians usually identify more with their ethnic groups and give their loyalty to these groups at the expense of Nigeria's corporate existence. This has led to agitations for more political participation and access to state resources by some groups that feel marginalised. This situation has led to the formation of militia movements across the country, perpetuating conflict and violence. This chapter encapsulates some factors that led to the emergence of some of these groups, their modus operandi and the implications of their activities on democratic governance. The article also tries to establish the involvement of some state governments in the sponsorship of some of these groups, and the official government response towards the existence of these

groups. The challenge then for both policy-makers and academics is how to transform the politics of identity along more benign routes from violence and exclusion to peaceful cooperation and accommodation.

CONCEPTUAL PREMISE

The nexus between ethnicity and conflicts was provided by Nnoli when he maintains that ethnicity depicts a social phenomenon associated with the interactions among members of different ethnic groups. According to Nnoli (1978 cf Ojie 2006):

1. Ethnicity exists only within a political society consisting of diverse ethnic groups.
2. Ethnicity is characterised by a common consciousness of being one in relation to other ethnic groups.
3. Ethnicity is characterised by conflicts.

Osaghae (1994) defines ethnicity as 'the corpus of relationships among people from different ethnic groups who decide to base these relationships on these differences.' Ethnicity in this case is said to be existing at the micro (individual) and macro (group) levels, to the extent that an analysis of one involves the other at a recurrent level. Ethnicity therefore is an unfriendly, parochial, spiteful and resentful attitude towards a particular person or harm done to someone else because he or she is of another ethnic group. Ethnicity and ethnic identification has often led to conflict in Nigeria.

Conflict on the other hand is a normal phenomenon among humans and can be expressed verbally or violently. On a daily basis there is always an attempt by one group or other to dominate or antagonise another. Otite sees conflict as arising from the 'pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals and/or groups in defined social and physical environments (Otite 1999: 3). Mckee (1981) defines conflict as, 'a struggle over values or scarce resources, in which two contesting groups each seek to impose values or claims on resources over those of the other. To do so, each seeks to maintain or change the social structure in terms of his or her own interests'. Most conflicts in Nigeria are underpinned by ethnic differences, and communal wars which members of the same ethnic group partake in in order to achieve a common objective. The heterogeneous and multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria has made the country a fertile ground for such conflicts.

A common feature is that rebel groups that support their ethnic groups in conflicts confine their recruitment to that single ethnic group with membership drawn from the same clan. Therefore, ethnicity is used to maintain rebel cohe-

sion in conflicts. Nigerians think more of their membership and allegiance to their ethnic groups than their belonging to the nation.

The militia on the other hand can be an organisation of trained citizens, enlisted or conscripted, who are mobilised in a period of emergency. The militia can also be a group of people who are not professional soldiers but who have military training and can act as an army. They are groups established with the main purpose of promoting the parochial interests of their ethnic groups and whose activities sometimes involve the use of violence (Adejumobi 2007). Ethnic militia groups in Nigeria act as social pressure groups that seek to influence the structure of power in the country and sometimes call the attention of the government to the deteriorating material conditions or political deprivation and perceived marginalisation of their groups. These groups sometimes provide physical security for their communities and undertake crime prevention (Adejumobi 2007).

The term ethnic militia in the Nigerian context is all embracing, consisting of not only the five major militia groups in the country namely the Oodua Peoples' Congress, Bakassi Boys, The Egbesu Boys of Africa, Arewa Peoples' Congress and MASSOB, but also the other ethnic militia groups formed since independence, although some have become extinct. Based on the subject of our discussion, the general paradigm of militia as referred in this context refers to an irregular or paramilitary group, made up of civilians or even retired law enforcement agents. Notwithstanding the fact that they are not members of a regular professional army, they operate in the same manner as the military due to their training, and are usually armed with small and light weapons. The existence of many of such groups in Nigeria, has provided a fertile environment for conflicts to thrive.

Several theories have been posited to explain ethnic conflicts and the ethnic nationalism, mobilisation, politicisation, and militancy that often underlie them. The resource competition theory maintains that ethnic identity is associated with the struggle for valued political and economic resources (Osaghae and Suberu 2005). This perspective, which analyses the issues involved in the struggles for identity, suggests that access to power and other cherished resources among ethnic groups are the root causes of conflicts and the rise of militia groups. The proponents of this view maintain that the policies of colonialism through the imposition of indirect rule brought discrete and smaller ethnic groups under the leadership of the dominant ones.

The dominant groups consider certain areas to be exclusively theirs at the expense of others. Their occupation of such areas consequently means their monopoly over the political and economic affairs of such areas. Consequently, they determine who occupies one political post or the other while the 'settlers' or the 'minorities' do not have the right to such political participation. In addition to dominating the political scene, the economic resources that fall in such

a region belong to the majority ethnic group of the area concerned. This consequently leads to conflicts between the various ethnic groups and the formation of militias to support their fight.

The next theory is the functionalist perspective that explains the difficulty in wielding a unified nation from the multiplicity of ethnic groups in a plural society like Nigeria. This perspective, advocated by scholars such as (Dudley 1968; Okpeh Jr 2007), maintains that despite attempts made at forging a unified country, there are difficulties in achieving these goals because of the multiplicity of ethnic groups in Nigeria. Scholars like (Collier, Hoeffler 2003), do not agree with the functionalist perspective. According to them, substantial ethnic and religious diversity reduces the risk of conflicts. They maintain that a society is safer if it is made up of many ethnic groups, despite the fact that people identify more with their own ethnic groups and less with the society as a whole. This is because ethnic groups in multi-ethnic societies police and check the actions of one another. This is safer than a nationwide collective or mass action in homogenous societies, or societies with few ethnic groups.

The plausibility of this argument is based on the following. First, if the largest ethnic group in a multi-ethnic society or society with few ethnic groups forms an absolute majority, the risk of conflict and successful rebellion is increased by approximately 50 per cent. A common feature is that rebel groups that support their ethnic groups in conflicts, confine their recruitment to that single ethnic group with membership drawn from the same clan. This explains why there are many ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.

It can be argued that where societies are highly fragmented along ethnic and religious dimensions, the risk of a large-scale war and rebellion is actually lower than in homogenous societies. Conflicts in countries with few large ethnic groups are more devastating and tend to last longer, while conflicts in countries with multi-ethnic groups do not last long though they may occur from time to time. A possible explanation is that in a state like Nigeria, large scale conflicts with large rebel groups will need to be multi-ethnic to succeed, but multi-ethnic rebel groups may not maintain the needed stability.

Closely related to the state-centred thesis, the elite construction thesis sees ethnic mobilisation as the creation of elites, including the governing and ruling elites in their struggles for representation, resources, and privileges. The plausibility of the argument by James O'Connell¹⁴ (cited in Okpeh Jr 2007) on the 'inevitability of conflicts' in a multi-ethnic society is upheld when the elites are blamed for manipulating ethnic differences and whipping up primordial sentiments to cause and sustain ethnic conflicts and frustrate nation building.

CASE ANALYSIS OF MILITIA GROUPS IN NIGERIA

The origin of ethnic militia movements in Nigeria can be traced to the period immediately after independence. This was when amorphous militia movements were engaged in the political upheavals that were directed against the Northern People's Party (NPC) controlled government (Vaaseh 2010: 102). However, the present structure of ethnic militias in Nigeria can be traced back to back to 1994 when the Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC) was formed.

THE ODUDUWA PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (OPC)

The Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC), came into existence as a result of the annulment of the 12 June 1993 presidential elections by Ibrahim Babangida (Fwatshak 2004:7). These elections were believed to have been won by Chief M.K.O. Abiola, a Yoruba man. The election was cancelled, and Chief Abiola was later detained. This meant the Yoruba had been unjustly prevented from taking over the presidency. Abiola's replacement Chief Ernest Shonekan, was removed from office within a few months and replaced by the late General Sani Abacha. The Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC) professes to work for the unity, progress, protection of all descendants of Oduduwa from whom it derives its name and inspiration. The OPC has two factions: one led by Dr Frederick Fasehun, a medical doctor, while the other is led by a radical young man, Chief Gani Adams (Ikelegbe 2005: 499). While a crop of middle-class intellectuals head the group, the bulk of its membership is illiterate and semi-literate.

Although the OPC is believed to have many high-profile patrons, including state governors who use them to settle political scores, the group is largely sustained by contributions from bus drivers and residents who solicit protection from thieves. OPC claims to have more than 5 million members in the southwest states of Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti as well as Kwara and Kogi in central Nigeria. It also boasts membership in Benin Republic, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Brazil, Germany, Jamaica, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The OPC after its formation changed its fundamental objective from seeking self-determination for the Yoruba people to crime-fighting activities and the settlement of personal disputes. However, the OPC has gone beyond vigilante activities and has also been involved in scores of armed attacks and mass murders against other ethnic groups living in southwest Nigeria, particularly in Lagos. The violence perpetuated by the OPC is carried out mainly by the Gani Adams faction. The faction was prone to violence and was behind the series of violent clashes pitching the Yoruba against the other ethnic groups especially in Lagos.

Fwatshak (2004:7), analyses some of the OPC led conflicts: (i) Opposition to Local Government elections in 1998. (ii) Clash with Hausa traders at Shagamu in Ogun State in 1999 on account of a Hausa woman defying the Yoruba tradition of restriction on movement of women at night during the annual Oro festival. (iii) A bloody clash between the Hausa and Yoruba over the control of the cattle market at Mile 12 in 1999. (iv) Ajegunle crisis in 1999 involving the Yoruba and Ijo factions of the Lagos port dockworkers. The OPC supported the Yoruba faction. (v) In 1999/2000 there were the Mushin riots when OPC members constituted themselves into a law enforcement agency and attacked residences of suspected criminals. They accused the police of having failed in their duty. The outcome of these riots was loss of many lives and destruction of valuable property. (vi) The OPC was also involved in bloody clashes with the police.

The activities of the OPC encouraged other militia groups to develop in the other geographical zones, since their activities seemed to have the backing of the government. The arrest and release of Gani Adams the factional leader, actually confirmed this assertion.

THE BAKASSI BOYS

The Bakassi Boys is a popular name given to the group of vigilante youths in the south-eastern states of Nigeria. Unlike the OPC, the Bakassi Boys were not formed to protect the Igbos. The group was formed in 1999, by the Abia and Anambra state governments to check the activities of armed robbers. Crime was rife as criminals operated boldly at will, as terrorising, abduction and raping orgies became the order of the day (Williams 2002: 109). The group was formed in response to these menaces and the prevalence of armed robbery, ritual killings and other social vices which the police had been unable to control.

The group was set up to contend these vices, especially the prevalence of armed robbery in major markets perpetuated by a group called 'mafia' (Ikelegbe 2005: 495). The success of the boys in eliminating the 'mafia' conferred on them a mythical status as they were invited to rid markets and towns of criminals. They also began to earn fat monthly salaries from the contributions of traders. The Bakassi boys soon became so popular that they began to enjoy the financial, moral and spiritual backing of their governments and people (Onimajesin 2009: 289).

The Bakassi boys soon began to arrest suspected criminals arbitrarily, with little or no evidence, torturing and summarily executing them in public. The activities of the Bakassi boys began to discredit some of the state governments that had earlier given them legal backing. Their excesses led to the arrest of 27 youths in Abia State. These youths were arrested and detained in the cells of

the Bakassi boys, where they suffocated to death. Innocent people who were reported missing were soon found to be dead at the groups cells across the State.

The Bakassi boys, it could be argued, initially operated with some measure of discipline before there was alleged infiltration of its ranks and from then it lost focus. They also started dabbling into civil matters, land cases, criminal matters and other legal issues meant exclusively for the law enforcement agencies and the courts. The situation led the then Inspector General of Police, Sunday Ehindero to disband the Bakassi Boys and all organisations resembling a police force. He was quoted in *This Day* newspaper saying, 'I have directed that all such outfits with semblance of a police force should be disbanded forthwith. We would not allow any illegal militia group to disturb the peace and tranquility of any part of this country.'

The Bakassi boys at first operated with a sense of decorum, which at first endeared them towards the people. With the active support of the government, they went haywire legalising brutality and lawlessness that later characterised the whole of east and south Nigeria. Their activities however reduced criminal activities in eastern Nigeria.

THE MOVEMENT FOR THE ACTUALIZATION OF THE SOVEREIGN STATE OF BIAFRA (MASSOB)

The Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), is one of the most vocal and radical ethnic militia groups in Nigeria. The group's vision is to revive the former secessionist state of Biafra which was created in 1967 but defeated after three years of civil war in 1970 (Nkolika 2007: 18). The group was formed in late 1999 and has is led by Barrister Ralph Uwazurike. The sudden emergence of MASSOB was to bring Biafra back into the international arena and to emancipate them from the clutches of marginalisation and intimidation which has been their lot since the civil war ended in 1970. Biafra was officially re-declared in Abia State on 27 May 2000 before a crowd of over 30 000 people.

However, the attempt at launching the 'New Biafra' with a national anthem, currency, national flag and constitution was unsuccessful. During the aborted launching, Uwazurike declared that the group had been created to protect the Igbo against lethal attacks, particularly by upholders of sharia laws in northern Kaduna State (Nkolika 2007:18). MASSOB adherents clash regularly with the police leading to casualties on both sides. In 2000 and 2001, MASSOB members had violent clashes with the police when their youths seized northbound fuel tankers. The youths claimed that there was an imbalance in the distribution of petroleum products in the country at the expense of the southeast.

Unfortunately, MASSOB does not enjoy the support of the Igbo elite. This is evidenced by the dissociation of five south-eastern state governments and the

people from the activities of MASSOB. Even Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu, who led the secession of the Igbos from Nigeria in 1967, does not lend his support. This lack of support from prominent Igbo sons has weakened the group.

THE MOVEMENT FOR SURVIVAL OF OGONI PEOPLE (MOSOP)

The Movement for Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), was formed in 1990 and has always campaigned for political autonomy and a fair share of the oil revenue derived from Ogoni land. The Ogonis had felt that the foreign oil and gas companies such as Shell, Chevron, Agip, Elf, etc. were being used by the Federal Government to siphon wealth from Ogoniland (Menegbon 2002: 126). The activities of these companies result in the destruction of the natural environment and the livelihood of local people who depend on land for survival. Forests and mangroves are cleared, community farmlands are destroyed, wetlands, creeks and community fishponds are polluted; thousands have been killed in oil pipeline explosions. Communities that depend on farming and fishing to survive have seen their livelihood destroyed by transnational oil companies (Menegbon 2002: 126).

Confronted with these difficulties, the Ogoni gathered in 1990 under their leader the late Ken Saro Wiwa and presented their Bill of Rights to the Nigerian State. This was to be presented peacefully as a protest to the Nigerian State and condemning the activities of the oil and gas transnationals. The government responded by crushing the movement. Following the launch of the Ogoni Bill of Rights in 1993, the Babangida regime enacted the treason and other treasonable offences Decree.

This law prescribed the death penalty for treasonable acts capable of breaking up Nigeria or any part thereof. It was this decree that charged Ken-Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni leader, with treason when he tried to organise the oil providing communities along MOSOP lines. Ken Saro Wiwa and other Ogoni leaders were tried by a special military tribunal which convicted and sentenced them to death, they were hanged on 8 November 1995 (Adejumobi 2007).

THE HISBAH GUARDS (SHARIA POLICE)

The Hisbah Guards (Sharia Police) are Islamic vigilante groups in the predominantly Muslim States of the north that have adopted the sharia legal system over recent years. They are responsible for enforcing the sharia law since members of the Nigerian Police Force are usually unwilling to do so. The states involved are Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kano, Jigawa, Katsina and Kaduna in the northwest; Yobe, Borno, Bauchi and Gombe in the northeast; and Niger State in the

north central region (*This Day* 3.3.2006). In Kano, the group was led by its State Commander Ustaz Yahaya Faruk Chedi. The sharia police first came up in Kano when the State House of Assembly under Governor Ibrahim Shekarau promulgated a law to make them legally accepted. The Sharia police originated from former Governor Musa Kwankwaso who first introduced the Hisbah committee to make contributions towards the implementation of sharia law in the State.

Members of the guard are screened, recruited and trained. They are given beautified uniforms and allowances and are allowed to operate and dispense justice on violators of the sharia law without reference to the police or government courts. The activities of the Hisbah guards are viewed with disdain and declared outlawed. The then Minister of Information, Mr Frank Nweke Jr., maintained that, 'Kano State Government has converted the guards into a parallel security outfit with foreign connections that would pose a threat to national security'.

In order to distance itself from the militia label that the Federal Government gave it, the Kano State Government noted that the Hisbah Board Law No.4, of 2003 spells out its functions as 'rendering necessary assistance to the police and other security agencies, especially in the area of prevention, detection and reporting of offences' (*This Day* 3.3.2006). The sharia police are not well coordinated; neither do they have any central leadership. However, they have often spearheaded violent conflicts with Christians and other non-Muslims in the North.

EGBESU BOYS OF AFRICA

Egbesu Boys of Africa is a militia group of the dominant Ijaw ethnic group of the Niger Delta Region. The Ijaws are found in six different states, including Bayelsa, Rivers, Edo, Delta, Ondo and Akwa Ibom. The Egbesu Boys of Africa are considered the military wing of the Ijaw National Congress which has vowed to fight against the exploitation of the Niger Delta by multinational oil companies and the Nigerian Government (Falana 2002: 184). The activities of Egbesu Boys consist of kidnapping foreign oil workers, sabotaging and vandalising oil installations and attacking law enforcement agents (Ikelegbe 2005: 496). Wealthy individuals in the Niger Delta region also use them as private armies and thugs.

The Egbesu is a deity and mythical god of revenge in the belief system in Ijawland and Egbesu (Ikelegbe 2005: 496). The Egbesu is perceived as a unifying spirit among the Ijaw standing for truth and justice. It is also the god of war to be consulted to assist and fortify warriors in turbulent times. The Egbesu determines when the cause of war is justified, dictates instruments of war and, it is believed, makes those initiated to their opponents.

In the context of the current struggle for justice and equity, the Egbesu Boys of Africa is the common fighting arm of all the militant Ijaw groups. There are several well-known Ijaw groups but all of them are coordinated by, and are part of the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC). The Egbesu is therefore the fighting arm of the Ijaw Youth Council in the struggle for equity and justice by the oil-bearing Ijaw communities in Nigeria. Since it is not an organised or cohesive militia movement, Egbesu militants are sustained by members' affiliation with various sub-groups of the IYC. The initiates are expected to comply with certain 'dos and don'ts'. At the pinnacle of the Egbesu movement is the chief priest whose responsibility includes communing with, and speaking on behalf of the deity and initiates, as well as providing spiritual protection and guidance to the initiated.

The Egbesu became relevant following the increased agitation and militancy resulting from social neglect, economic and political marginalisation and underdevelopment of Ijawland by the oil companies and the Nigerian State. As the youths became more militant and involved in the struggle, the Federal Government and oil companies also became more and more repressive in their approach to the problem. The result was that the Niger Delta region became highly militarised, with the Nigerian Navy, Army and Nigerian Police deeply involved in protecting oil facilities and harassing militant elements and innocent citizens, often leading to clashes (*The News* 18.1.1999; *Newswatch* 6.11.2006). The Ijaw youths became more trenchant and defiant in the face of government insensitivity to the plight of the region and its people and the consequent military pacification that has been the hallmark of government's response. This policy gave birth to a plethora of militant groups that are now engaged in the struggle to change the plight of the Niger Delta in general.

THE AREWA PEOPLE CONGRESS (APC)

The Arewa People Congress (APC) formally came into existence in December 1999, barely six months into the existence of President Olusegun Obasanjo's new civilian administration. Unlike other militia groups that sought change, the APC emerged firstly because it wanted the maintenance of the status quo: the preservation of the privileges of the Northern oligarchy that had existed before the new civilian administration (Akinyemi 2002:22). The APC also came into existence to counter the activities of the OPC and Egbesu Boys in the Niger Delta (Ozekhome 2002:190).

The fact that the APC is composed of prominent and respected northern leaders, coupled with their non-violent posture places the organisation in the position to mediate in the turbulent political climate and call the northern restive youths to order.

THE BOKO HARAM

The religious sect Boko Haram is a militant movement literally meaning 'Western education is sin', and it is their desire to rid the nation of the 'sins of Westernization' by an attempt, to install a parallel government based on the Islamic principles. According to Ustaz Yusuf, one of their leaders, all those Northern Nigeria Governors clamouring for Sharia were hypocrites. Based in the northern regions of Nigeria especially Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, Boko Haram draws its recruits from a large number of followers stretching across northern Nigeria into Chad. Boko Haram seeks the imposition of strict Islamic law in the predominantly Muslim north of Nigeria. The poorer Muslims in the north view the lack of basic social services and repeated incidents of police brutality with disdain, a situation that must be addressed. Considering the groups modus operandi, the South South Peoples Assembly (SSPA) has described the fundamentalist Islamic sect, Boko Haram, as:

a political tool in the hands of some powerful Nigerians who have resolved to destabilize President Goodluck Jonathan's government, and terror tactics adopted by the sect as orchestrated plots by some disgruntled persons to make Nigeria ungovernable during the reign of President Jonathan (*The Guardian* 27.8.2011).

In recent times, Boko Haram has conducted repeated attacks, killings and bomb attacks in different parts of the country. The magnitude of destruction is expressed by an eye witness:

I was in Maiduguri August for over a week in 2009 after the Boko Haram attacks that set Borno State ablaze, literally. The level of destruction was unprecedented. I visited the prison and police stations that were sacked. I went to the police college where senior police officers on course were slaughtered while sleeping. I saw churches that were bombed (*Daily Independent* 20.1.2011).

The group's leader, Malam Muhammad Yusuf, had earlier been killed on 30 July 2009 after he was captured by the army and turned over to the police in Maiduguri (*Terrorism Monitor* 26.3. 2010).

The Boko Haram sect has been carrying out a series of bombings and suicidal attacks on strategic Nigerian locations recently. These include the bombing near Eagles Square Abuja, on 1 October, during Nigeria's Independent celebrations, bombs set off in Borno, Lagos and the suicide bombing of the Police Force Headquarters in Abuja on Thursday 16 June 2010. The group has claimed responsibility for these damages and their spokesman Abu Dardam has ruled out any form of negotiation with the government with a promise to do more harm (*Saturday Tribune* 18.6.2011). In addition to the mindless killings

of innocent Nigerians, the sect's members also carry out wanton destruction of property in a bid to make people in the zone embrace their views on Islamic religious code and western education. The group killed the governorship candidate on the platform of All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Engineer Modu Fannami Gubio and six other persons, who had just finished performing their Friday Juma'at prayers (*Saturday Tribune* 18.6.2011). The sect also killed five policemen including the Divisional Police Officer and a civilian after raiding a branch in Kankara, Kankara local government area of Katsina State and distributed money to the people as they escaped with the loot from the bank (*National Mirror* 26.6.2011).

As of the time of writing this article, the group has just bombarded the central part of Maiduguri leaving about 25 people dead (*The Punch* 27.6.2011). A suicide bomber also drove at top speed crashing into the gates of the United Nations House in Abuja, killing 23 people and wounding many. A spokesman of the sect claimed responsibility to this attack and declared that this was only a tip in the iceberg as they had more than a 100 of their 'brethren,' who are willing to lay down their lives (*Saturday Tribune* 18.6.2011). The group has recently been carrying out suicide attacks on churches in the Northern part of the country, and has also been engaged in kidnapping foreign nationals.

Wherever the group operates, it often leaves behind horror and scenes of destruction, maiming and death. In Borno, the stronghold of the group, many lives and property have been lost to guerrilla-like attacks unleashed on the residents of the ancient town of Maiduguri by the sect since it began its operations a few years ago.

A close observation of the activities of this group points to the assertion that the group is against the leadership of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), especially President Jonathan who is from a southern minority group. Attempts in the past by the government to negotiate with the dreaded sect failed to produce positive results.

OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT'S REACTION AND YAR ADUA'S AMNESTY PROGRAMME

Nigerian leaders over the years have neglected the demands of militia groups. Instead of addressing the perceived problems that make militia groups flourish, the Nigerian leaders have always adopted in futility, policies that seek to exterminate such groups or eliminate their leaders. Following the launching of the Ogoni Bill of Rights in 1993, the Babangida administration enacted the Treason and Treasonable Offences decree (Falana 2002: 185). This decree prescribed death penalty on any individual engaged in 'treasonable' activities.

The Obasanjo civilian administration on April 9, 2002, sent a bill to the National Assembly curtailing the activities of Ethnic militia groups in the country (Ehidiemen 2002: 161). Apart from these, the government has continued its policy of intimidation, arrest and torture by law enforcement agents of Nigerians at the slightest provocation. The first positive step towards the resolution of militia activities was by the late president Musa Yar Adua.

On 6 August 2009, Late Nigerian President Musa Yar Adua proposed a 60-day amnesty programme for militants in the Niger Delta. This was an effort to end years of attacks on Nigeria's oil and gas industry, considered to be the biggest in Africa (*The Nation* 5.10.2009). This move was also to halt widespread oil theft, pipeline bombings and kidnappings for ransom. Militant attacks in the region, where foreign oil firms including Royal Dutch Shell, Mobil and Chevron have operations, cut Nigerian oil output to less than two thirds of its installed capacity of three million barrels per day.

According to a report by the Technical Committee of the Niger Delta, Nigeria lost Trillions of Naira, thousands of people have been killed and hundreds taken hostage in recent years (*Newswatch* 4.5.2009). This situation led to heavy militarisation of the area, and despite the presence of the Joint Military Task Force (JTF), and the huge amount spent for its maintenance, insecurity was on the increase with the oil companies paying huge sums to the militant groups as bribes to ensure the safety of their property (*Newswatch* 2009). In the amnesty programme, all the militants who respond positively to the call to lay down their arms were to receive presidential pardon and become immune to criminal prosecution. In addition, they were to become free citizens and fully integrated and rehabilitated at government expense.

Following this development, many militant groups gave up their arms. This has led to a decline of militant activities in the Niger Delta as about 15000 militants were said to have embraced the programme. The once-restive Niger Delta, which holds over 95 per cent of Nigeria's substantial oil reserves, is enjoying a period of relative peace following the amnesty deal extended to the militants in 2009. Oil production is again on the rise; attacks on pipelines and shipping facilities, and the kidnapping of oil workers have largely reduced (*National Mirror* 21.6. 2011).

The amnesty programme though a step in the right direction, seemed to treat the symptoms, rather than causes of militancy (disarming scattered groups and paying them stipends). Many activists in the region still see this as a superficial approach, lacking a comprehensive diagnosis and the political will to tackle the underlying malady. While the amnesty programme is a reasonable first step it does little to address the root causes of the conflict, the most salient of which is the lack of development in an oil producing region that accounts for about 80 per cent of government revenue nationwide.

For now, the government is rehabilitating and sending out ex-militants to different parts of the world for training in skills acquisition and pursuance of university degrees. The government also pays out stipends of about N65000 monthly to the ex-militants. There are also dissident voices as some militant groups have replaced commanders that embraced the amnesty programme and vowed to fight on (*The Nation* 5.10.2009). The situation in the Niger Delta is also likely to change for the worst should the money cease to flow, or should it become clear that the government is insincere on tackling the developmental issues at the root of the militants' grievances.

The amnesty programme should be seen by the current administration as an opportunity for the long term institutional resolution of the conflict in the Niger Delta. A coordinated approach by the Federal Government, in collaboration with state governments in the region, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs will be a handy tool in the permanent resolution of the crisis.

THE WAY FORWARD

The genesis of the Niger Delta conflicts started immediately after the British granted independence to Nigeria in 1960. The Niger Delta Volunteer Force led by Issac Adaka Boro may be described as the first organised militia group in post independent Nigeria. Boro in 1966 with '150 warriors' organised a rebellion to pull the Ijo people of the Niger Delta out of Nigeria and place them under his 'Niger Delta Republic'. The rebellion lasted for only 12 days before it was violently crushed.

Boro and two others Samuel Owunaro and Dick Nottingham were tried for treasonable felony and sentenced to death (Thomas 2008:239). The nationalities of the Niger Delta have been complaining of the wanton exploitation of their resources and destruction of their environment in various ways. They also argue that though they produce 90 per cent of the country's wealth, the area has continued to wallow in poverty and neglect. It is like neglecting the goose that lays the golden egg. The Niger Delta area as many places in Nigeria should be sufficiently developed to prevent recurrent conflicts, because the argument long canvassed is that once an insurgency begins, it assumes a life of its own and takes different dimensions, it becomes difficult to stop.

A World Bank policy research report, speaks of conflicts that come into being because the countries concerned had failed to develop in different areas such as educational, industrial, economic development, and so forth. That sufficient development serves as an impediment to conflicts. Where development succeeds, countries become increasingly safer from violent conflicts, but where development fails, countries are at risk of being caught up in a conflict trap or

a vicious circle in which the war wrecks the economy and increases the risk of another war. The report observes that once a country is caught up in a conflict, it is in far greater danger of another conflict: commonly the chief legacy of a conflict is another war (Collier; Elliot 2003:x).

However, the blame for the insurgency and attendant mutating dimensions rests squarely on the doorstep of the government, whose lack of diplomacy and repressive colonialist methods over the years nurtured and sustained the militants. The fact that there are many ethnic militias and separatist groups in Nigeria is proof that there are many grievances and injustices in a system which needs to be addressed, but the federal government rather than engage the ethnic militia groups in constructive dialogue characteristically chose the strong arm methods of a sometimes very bloody clampdown on such groups.

If history can be our guide, such methods have never succeeded anywhere in the world in the resolution of conflicts. Thus the militias in Nigeria have continued to thrive in spite of long years of repression, and the multiplier effects of such failed federal government policies is the widening scale and scope of subversive militant activities we witness to date.

The Nigerian government's reactive strategy to conflicts has always proved to be a failure. Rather than resolve issues amicably, the federal government has always responded with brute force, and increased militarisation of the area. This has always proved abortive. The government should have a proactive strategy towards the resolution of conflicts. The crises have outlived many regimes and are increasingly a thorn in the flesh of the government which fails to find a solution.

The government should re-examine the cases of all militants currently in detention without trial with a view to hosting a amicable dialogue in view of resolving all complaints of injustices, if any. It doesn't take much to make car bombs, truck bombs or improvised explosive devices (IEDS) these days. Indeed bomb making information is widely available on the Internet. Any faceless fragmented group so determined can cause maximum damage and make the nation ungovernable. These are the stark realities of our times. The federal government must avoid the mistakes of the past.

Dialogue has proven to be a more viable means to peace than the most sophisticated weapons of war. It has won wars and resolved conflicts which weapons could not win. If there is any hope that Nigeria can know some peace and internal harmony, it can only be achieved through dialogue and not force of arms.

There have been recent calls by Nigerians that the government should not engage in dialogue or negotiate with the Boko Haram sect. This is not the best way of resolving conflicts. The government should identify the leaders of this sect and negotiate with them. The federal government must face the glaring realities and be humble enough to discuss with militia groups that have refused to

embrace the amnesty programme. The government should also look for ways of discussing with the other Ethnic militia groups like the APC, MEND, MASSOB, OPC and others in a peace conference to find lasting solutions to the related political, structural, social and economic crisis bedevilling the nation. These organisations could be of benefit to the government if properly harnessed.

The government should also tackle fundamental issues such as the provision of basic social amenities such as employment, housing, electricity, water, security, et cetera. This will provide an enabling environment for Nigerians and foreigners who are interested in doing business in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of ethnicity, conflicts and ethnic militia movements in Nigeria is an age long problem. A critical examination of the origin and modus operandi of the various militia groups shows a nexus between ethnicity and conflicts. The formation and sponsorship of the various militia groups in Nigeria is underpinned by decades of abnormalities in the different governments since independence, though intensified in the 1990s. It is the contention of this article that the government needs to tackle the fundamental issues that make these groups thrive. If this is not done, militia groups will rise to unprecedented levels that could become difficult to control. This paper favours a proactive approach which includes dialogue rather than the governments favoured reactive approach as a panacea to militant activities in Nigeria.

The betrayal of liberation

On the limits to emancipation under post-liberation governments
in Southern African post-settler societies

Henning Melber

INTRODUCTION

‘Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely.’ – *Lord Acton*

‘We can easily become like that which we oppose or hate most.’ – *Desmond Tutu*

This chapter explores some aspects of the narrow translation of a liberation movement – an agency of transformation – into an exclusivist apparatus claiming to represent the interest of *all* people and a total monopoly in advocating the public interest. It thereby tries to explain to some extent the dominant party syndrome under Southern African liberation movements, which have been in power since Independence.¹⁵ Sobering postcolonial realities have not met the expectations of those who considered the fight against colonialism as a fight for the implementation of positive values and norms linked to enhanced socio-economic equality, civil and human rights, democracy and other individual freedoms (Saul 2010a). Instead, the postcolonial reality reflects the contradictions and challenges of revolutionary optimism turned into the self-righteous entitlement culture of a new elite. A ‘predatory elite’, as the former trade union leader and member of South Africa’s Cabinet Jay Naidoo qualifies it for his own country from his current perspective (Barron 2010).

As the introductory quotes suggest, the critical approach to the issue under consideration draws on a variety of perspectives and perceptions. What they have in common is that they seek to come to terms with the (ab)use of political power under related conditions and historical contexts. This chapter is presenting evidence to the authoritarian political tendencies in post-settler societies in Southern Africa. It paints a picture using different colours, though inspired by the disappointment over the ‘pitfalls of national consciousness’ already be-moaned by Frantz Fanon (2001) in a chapter of his manifesto more than half a century ago. It is the critique of political power applied in pursuance of elitist projects while cloaked in populist dresses. But we should not be misled: these are the emperor’s new clothes.

Like Fanon, some far-sighted scholars and writers on the continent had seen this coming. Among them is Arturo Carlos Maurício Pestana. He published the notes he collected in 1971 during his participation in the guerrilla war of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in the rainforest (the *mayombe*) of the Cabinda front under his *nom de guerre* as a groundbreaking novel. It offers a remarkable degree of sensitivity and insight into the complexity and limits of social transformation subsequent to a situation of armed resistance against foreign occupation under colonial rule. In a revealing dialogue, the commander of the guerrilla unit 'Fearless' explains to the political commissar 'New World', for whom he ultimately sacrifices his life in battle:

We don't share the same ideals. (...) You are the machine type, one of those who are going to set up the unique, all-powerful Party in Angola. I am the type who could never belong to the machine. [...] One day, in Angola, there will no longer be any need for rigid machines, and that is my aim. [...] what I want you to understand, is that the revolution we are making is half the revolution I want. But it is the possible. I know my limits and the country's limits. My role is to contribute to this half-revolution. [...] I am, in your terminology, adventurer. I should like the discipline of war to be established in terms of man and not the political objective. My guerrillas are not a group of men deployed to destroy the enemy, but a gathering of different, individual beings, each with his subjective reasons to struggle and who, moreover, behave as such. [...] I am happy when I see a young man decide to build himself a personality, even if politically that signifies individualism. (...) I cannot manipulate men, I respect them too much as individuals. For that reason, I cannot belong to a machine (Pepetela 1996: 197–198).

As we know today, this conversation is more than fiction. It sensibly describes the authoritarian culture emerging and its socio-political constraints for individual emancipation within Southern African societies infected by a history and legacy of armed resistance against settler colonialism. This remained not unnoticed also among a few far-sighted activists within the academic sphere. Helliker (2010: 137) reminds us that the Durban based social scientist Rick Turner, who was assassinated by the killers of the Apartheid-regime in the mid-1970s, already foresaw 'the rise and consolidation of statism'. As Turner diagnosed 40 years ago:

The political party as mediator between the individual and government tends to take on the characteristics of the system itself, the 'party machine' dominates the membership and the rank and file become increasingly divorced from policy making. ... The political arena becomes polarised between an atomised mass and a number of small groups trying to manipulate the mass in order to get political

jobs. The result of this is to move the source of power in society out of the political arena and into the control of functional power groups (Turner 1971: 81).

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSERVATION OF POLITICAL RULE

Governments were formed by the anti-colonial liberation movements, which seized political power after a long process marred by violence. They took control of the state machinery and reorganised themselves as political parties. Their legitimacy to rule stemmed from their emergence from the decolonisation process as representatives acting on behalf of the majority of the people. Since then, with varying results (and sometimes with the use of further organised violence as illustrated most spectacularly in the case of Zimbabwe), they have been able to maintain their political dominance and control over the state apparatus.

The social transformation of Southern African societies shaped by a settler colonial brand can at best be characterised as a transition from controlled change to changed control. Facilitated by negotiations with the involvement of mediators representing third parties and their interests, the aim was to secure a transition and transfer of political agency without drastic transformation of other fundamental pillars of social organisation, such as property rights, on which the reproduction of society is based. The result is a new ruling political elite operating from commanding heights, whose foundations are further strengthened by selective narratives and memories related to the war(s) of liberation. These create new (to some extent invented) traditions to establish an exclusive postcolonial legitimacy under the sole authority of one particular agency of social forces (see Kriger 1995; Werbner 1998b for Zimbabwe; and Melber 2002c, 2005 and 2007 for Namibia). It suggests the re-invention of a society, while the proclaimed revolutionary changes only cover up for the manifest lack thereof.

The mystification of the liberators plays an essential role in this fabrication. Visible signs of postcolonial 'patriotic history' include the *Chimurenga* (liberation struggle) music of Zimbabwe (which has been turned into a perverted form of self-adoration under the Mugabe regime) and the Heroes Acres in the capitals of Harare and Windhoek. Both were constructed by a North Korean company and are of striking similarity in their display of unashamedly heroic narrative and symbolism. They suggest a one-dimensional linearity from early to modern anti-colonial resistance and celebrate the leaders of 'the one and only' liberation movement and government. The symbolic language of such enactment is one of male chauvinism and militarism – hardly any different from the *machismo* of the colonial monuments. Other examples of the invention of postcolonial exclusivity are the choice of national holidays that tend to com-

memorate the achievements and sacrifices of the 'one movement's' struggle as all-embracing national events.

The autobiography of Sam Nujoma (2001), Namibia's first Head of State and leader of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) since the party's establishment, is another example of similarly reduced nationalist focus. The autobiography is treated as official history and was turned into a Hollywood film at a cost of N\$50-million from the public purse. Saunders says that as 'a partial, highly selective account', it 'wishes to try to stamp a certain version of the past on the nation's collective memory, to help shape the future' (2003: 98). Its reading, as the historian Saunders further suggests, 'will bring no comfort to those concerned about the future of democracy in Namibia today' (Saunders 2003; see also Saunders 2007).

The situational application of militant rhetoric as a tool for inclusion or exclusion in terms of postcolonial national identity is common practice. It demonstrates that declared notions of national reconciliation and the slogan of 'unity in diversity' are not receiving appropriate acknowledgement in terms of political pluralism. Politically correct identity is instead defined by those in power along narrow lines of (self-) definition and (self-) understanding. As observed by Yap in the case of Zimbabwe:

[W]hilst power relations had changed, *perceptions* of power had *not* changed. The layers of understanding regarding power relations, framed by socialisation and memory, continue[d] to operate. [...] [Although] actors had changed [...] the way in which the new actors executed power in relation to opposition had not, [because] their mental framework remained in the colonial setting. Patterns from colonial rule of 'citizens' ruling the 'subjects' [were] repeated and reproduced.¹⁶ (Yap 2001: 312-313; original emphasis).

The goal of the struggle was national liberation defined as political independence in a sovereign state under a government representing the majority of the previously colonised people, who were excluded from full participation in society through the imposition of the Apartheid system. The power of definition in the postcolonial system of political governance was exercised mainly by the national liberation movement in interaction with the international system represented by a variety of competing actors under the polarised conditions of superpower rivalry during the 1970s and 1980s. This implies that the struggle was influenced by exile politics and international diplomacy.

The independence processes in Zimbabwe and Namibia resulted first and foremost in an internationally monitored and legitimated transfer of political power. That the political power exercised by and large met the definitions and expectations of a democratic political system was a desired result, but not the

main goal. The liberation struggle was understood and primarily perceived as the right to self-determination of the population on the basis of free and fair general elections. Decolonisation, not democratisation, was therefore the priority.

Both independence and a democratic system were achieved to some extent in a parallel process at the same time. But it is important to note that these goals are neither identical nor necessarily congruent. One might argue that the principles agreed upon by the parties prior to the elections in the cases of Zimbabwe (1980), Namibia (1989) and South Africa (1994) were a prerequisite for the implementation of a joint resolution of conflict and served as an agreed framework and point of departure for the foundations of the newly established or modified state. They were in all three cases characterised by a notion of plural democracy. Others might counter, however, that the democratic component was designed to maintain a status quo under a controlled change in terms of securing the existing property relations and former privileges by those who benefited from colonial minority rule.

DECOLONISATION AS UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The postcolonial politics of the ruling parties often show a blatant lack of democratic awareness and forms of neo-patrimonial systems. A case study of Mozambique by Braathen and Orre suggests that despite regular elections, 'they have not been accompanied by a steady institutionalisation and 'Mocambicanisation' of democratic values, norms and rules'¹⁷ (Braathen/Orre 2001: 200). The party machine also serves as a vehicle for economic wheeling and dealing in favour of the political dons and their clientele (Saul 2010b). Such trends of political entrenchment of particular class interests at the expense of democracy and redistributive socio-economic measures beyond privileging a new elite are also visible in other Southern African countries. The denial of collective political participation of the majority goes hand in hand with the continued socio-economic exclusion of those who remain politically marginalised (see the contributions to Melber 2003a and 2003b).

The unabated exploitation of Angola's oil wealth by a powerful oligarchy within the ruling MPLA, when the country's population remains among the most destitute in the world, despite an end to the civil war, is one of the biggest scandals on the continent. Elections in Angola were postponed time and again, denying the citizens the right to vote for an alternative, with the ruling party using the delays to manufacture control over the electoral process to guarantee itself victory. In such circumstances constitutionalism and the rule of law are absent from the political system in place (cf. Vidal/Chabal 2009).

Instead, those in government and state institutions take over civil society (Messiant 2001) and turn the country into a corporate business of those in

control over the party (Marques de Morais 2010a and 2010b, Sogge 2010). Neither the enormous revenue income generated by the exploitation of crude oil, nor the wealth resulting from the mining of diamonds, improves the living conditions of the ordinary people in a meaningful way, as in the latter case a report by the Bishop's Conference of Angola criticised (Croese 2010).

Tendencies towards autocratic rule and the subordination of the state under the party, as well as politically motivated social and material favours as a reward system for loyalty or disadvantages as a form of coercion in cases of dissents are common techniques.

The political rulers' penchant for self-enrichment with the help of a rent – or sinecure – capitalism goes hand in hand with the exercise of comprehensive controls to secure the continuance of their rule. Accordingly, the term 'national interest' means solely what *they* say it means. Based on the rulers' (self-) perception, individuals and groups are allowed to participate in, or are excluded from, nationbuilding. According to Harrison the 'national interest' therefore serves the purpose 'to justify all kinds of authoritarian practice' and that the concepts of 'anti-national' or 'unpatriotic' can be defined basically as any group that resists the power of the ruling elite of the day' (Harrison 2001: 391). Such selective mechanisms of the exercise and retention of power have little or nothing to do with democratic principles, but have much in common with the commando structures that emerged during the days of the liberation struggle, especially in exile. A South African political activist, Kadalie, summarised her experiences as follows:

Many of my former comrades have become loyal to a party rather than to principles of justice. [...] Unfortunately it is true that those who have been oppressed make the worst democrats. There are recurring patterns in the behaviour of liberation parties – when they come to power they uphold the most undemocratic practices (Kadalie 2001).

In view of such frustrating realities, which followed the initial euphoria of attaining sovereignty under international law, there is a growing tendency to critically analyse the processes through which victims (former liberation fighters) become perpetrators (cf. Lamb 2001). Breaking the taboos in this regard is necessary in a debate that deals increasingly with the results of liberation, analyses the concept of solidarity in the past and marks the end of the cultivation of 'heroic narratives'.

The much-celebrated attainment of formal independence is no longer being equated with liberation, and certainly not with the creation of lasting democracy and more political and economic equality. While this article focuses exclusively on the internal constraints as contributing factors, they can of course not be looked at in isolation from the wider context. It needs to be clearly

stated here, that the constraints defined by a global framework of controlled change have external economic and political interests at its core. These economic interests at stake and the resulting limited policy options are as much, if not even more so, a limiting obstacle to the pursuance and implementation of any truly emancipatory alternatives.

Having said this, the onus still rests with those in political control and power over domestic issues, to document that their priorities would be on the side of the poor, instead of having the consolidation of their own interests as a priority on the agenda. Rather, they prefer to establish themselves as the junior partners in a global pact among elites instead of joining sides with those they claim to represent in 'the public interest.' The anti-imperialist rhetoric of those holding offices in the newly established party and state machinery does not really challenge the imperialist interests, but rather casts a smokescreen over the complementing interests.

There is also a growing insight that the armed liberation struggles were not a suitable breeding ground for establishing democratic systems of government following independence and prevents any glorification of 'the struggle'. The methods of resistance against totalitarian regimes were organised on strictly hierarchical and authoritarian lines. If not, they would hardly have had any prospect of success. In this sense, the new societies carried within them essential elements of the old system, which they had fought against. Aspects of the colonial system reproduced themselves in the struggle for its abolition and subsequently in the concepts of governance that were applied in postcolonial conditions.

The result is that the new system has little transparency. As a new elite in the making, those in power are at best prepared to be accountable only to themselves and care little about the notion of popular democracy (Good 2002). There is a lack of (self-) critical awareness and extremely limited willingness to accept divergent opinions, particularly if they are expressed in public. Non-conformist thinking is interpreted as disloyalty, if not equated with treason. This marginalisation or elimination of dissent drastically limits the new system's capacity for reform and innovation. A culture of fear, intimidation and silence inhibits the possibilities of durable renewal at the cost of the public good. In the long term, the rulers are themselves undermining their credibility and legitimacy. The latest case in point is the initiative of South Africa's government to impose tight restrictions on the media freedom (Pithouse 2010b).

Fifty years ago, the Martinique born psychiatrist and political revolutionary, Frantz Fanon, who had joined the Algerian liberation struggle, presciently described in his manifesto, 'The Wretched of the Earth', the internal contradictions and limits to emancipation in anti-colonial resistance and organised liberation movements. Writing at a time when the Algerian war of liberation had not even ended, Fanon presaged the abuse of government power after at-

tainment of independence in the wake of establishing a one-party state. In a chapter entitled 'The Pitfalls of National Consciousness' – mentioned already at the beginning of this chapter – he predicted that the state, which both vigorously and by restraint should convey a sense of security, trust and stability, instead foists itself on the people in a spectacular way, harassing and mistreating the citizens and in this way showing that it is in permanent danger (Fanon 2001: 132). He continues by criticising the abuse of power exercised by the party, which:

[C]ontrols the masses, not in order to make sure that they really participate in the business of governing the nation, but in order to remind them constantly that the government expects from them obedience and discipline. [...] The political party, ... instead of welcoming the expression of popular discontentment, instead of taking for its fundamental purpose the free flow of ideas from the people up to the government, forms a screen and forbids such ideas (Fanon 2001: 146 and 147).

The blending of party, government and state among the liberation movements in power indicates a very similar development in the post-apartheid era of Southern Africa. A pattern of using force to gain liberation from the undemocratic and repressive conditions that prevailed in the colonial societies of Southern Africa was hardly favourable for the durable strengthening of humanitarian values and norms. In the course of abolishing anachronistic and degrading systems of rule, these constellations created new challenges on the difficult path to establishing sound and robust structures and institutions, seeking to promote more equality. Socio-economic and -political as well as -cultural fundamentals were in nature hardly changed and often only modified at the surface. At the end of the day, independence without such more principled transformation, however, is still far from being liberation in the true sense of emancipation from both foreign rule and a mindset internalised under colonialism.

ZIMBABWE AND BEYOND: LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN POWER

In Zimbabwe, the violent practices within and between the liberation movements escalated soon after independence in organised massacres in Matabeleland (the western part of Zimbabwe occupied mostly by Ndebele-speakers considered to be in their majority supporters to the Joshua Nkomo led Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), competing with Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) for power). Between early 1983 and late 1987, an estimated 20000 people lost their lives through horrific acts of barbarism carried out by the Fifth Brigade of the Zimbabwe National Army, trained by North Korean military advisors.

Although known and reported at the time, the massacres were largely ignored, even by the former colonial power. Described by Robert Mugabe as *Gukurahundi* ('the rain that washes away the chaff before the summer rains', (cf. Phimister 2008), the organised mass violence constituted a defining moment for his regime.

The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe was a lonely voice revealing the scale of atrocities. Since then, the openly violent character of Mugabe's rule has drawn worldwide attention. Notably, however, it only became a concern for the international community (as represented by the Western countries) when the so-called fast track land reform dispossessed the majority of the commercial farmers and portrayed the conflict (misleadingly so) as one between a remaining white settler minority and the government. This suggests a moral selectivity in Western perceptions, which the populist rhetoric of the despotic regime managed to exploit.

The solidarity displayed by African leaders towards the manipulations and vote rigging in hijacking the presidential elections in Zimbabwe by the reigning ZANU already in March 2002 and ever since then – not least the ignorance displayed before, during and after the parliamentary elections in March 2005 and the refusal to sanction the regime's refusal to vacate the seats of political power as a result of the lost elections in 2008 – went even a step further. Being in denial of any of the blatant forms of abuse of power bordering to systematic mass atrocities, such as operation *Murambatsvina* ('restore order', cf. Ndlovu 2008), questions the degree of seriousness of African states in applying the notions articulated within the credo of their constitutions and the normative frameworks they subscribe to.

In the light of the polarisation between the loyalty offered by most African leaders to 'Comrade Bob' and the interventionist position of those in the Western world through imposing sanctions as a result of the so-called fast track land reform, Zimbabwe almost turned into an issue of Africa against the rest of the world. This is obvious in the congratulatory message the secretary general of South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia conveyed to the administrative secretary of Zimbabwe African National Union -Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) after Mugabe's re-election:

[O]n behalf of the leadership and the entire membership [...] our elation over the resounding victory scored. ... Your party's triumph is indeed victory for Southern Africa in particular and the African continent at large. It is victory over neo-colonialism, imperialism and foreign sponsored puppetry. We in SWAPO Party knew quite well that despite imperialist intransigence and all round attempts by enemies of peace, democracy and the rule of law to influence the outcome of the elections in favour of neck-chained political stooges, people of Zimbabwe would not succumb an inch to external pressure. They spoke with one

overwhelming voice to reject recolonization. Their verdict should, therefore, be respected unconditionally by both the external perpetrators of division and their hired local stooges, who have been parading themselves as democrats. ... As we join your great nation in celebrating this well deserved and indeed well earned victory over the forces of darkness and uncertainty, we wish to call upon the people of Zimbabwe to prove to the prophets of doom that they can do without their unholy blessing, through hard work. In the same vein, we call for unity of purpose among the African people as the only viable weapon to ward off outside influence (SWAPO Party 2002).

It is noteworthy that Hifikepunye Pohamba, signing this message in his function as the party's Secretary General, has in 2005 resumed office as Sam Nujoma's successor as Head of State and started his second term in office in 2010. While the view he expressed seems unrealistic to the degree of being almost irrational, its (dis-) qualification would ignore the inner logic of the attitudes and policies displayed not only by SWAPO cadres, but to an extent also by other political office bearers of other liberation movements.

For the national liberation movements the seizure of power signals in their understanding something similar to what the US-American philosopher Francis Fukuyama (1992) dubbed as 'the end of history' (in his case with reference to the collapse of the Soviet system and the unchallenged hegemony of capitalism). From this understanding follows that a liberation movement should stay in power forever after succeeding in its anti-colonial struggle. Sam Nujoma as the former President of SWAPO and 'Founding Father of the Republic of Namibia', confirmed this view by concluding a speech to the SWAPO Party Youth League in 2010 with the following words, which resonate dangerously with earlier totalitarian regimes:

As Namibian youth, and as Africans, you must therefore be on the full alert and remain vigilant against deceptive attempts by opportunists and unpatriotic elements that attempt to divide you. As the future leaders of our country, you should act with dedication and commitment; to always promote the interests of the SWAPO Party and the national interests before your own. It is only through that manner that the SWAPO Party will grow from strength to strength and continue to rule Namibia for the next ONE THOUSAND YEARS (Nujoma no date, http://www.swapoparty.org/where_we_came_from.html (accessed 16 July 2010)).

There is another related, general (and moral) conclusion from Zimbabwe's currently anomalous situation in as much as Mugabe and some of his bedfellows taint the history of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa and the values it claimed to strive for. ZANU-PF insults by its present politics the moral and

ethical claims that motivated the local and international support for armed struggle in order to realise political self-determination. It is exactly this notion of self-determination, so dearly fought for at the costs of many lives, which is now so utterly disrespected by the new political rulers. They are not prepared to abandon political power and instead act against the will of the people. Through their totalitarian mindset they betray the values of democracy and popular participation they were in the past claiming to represent and which were assumed to be among the reasons for at least some of the international support by a solidarity movement. In return for continued despotic rule, at the cost of the ordinary people, they discredit their earlier legitimacy in liberating a country and its people. Victims turn into perpetrators. The rights of all are sacrificed for the privileges of a few. This is not sufficient progress compared with the situation under settler colonialism for those who continue to suffer. It is evidence of the unfinished business called decolonisation.

Not so, of course, in the view of those who hold local power today. Jacob Zuma visited Namibia a couple of months before assuming office as South African Head of State as the ANC President on 8 December 2008. He met with President Hifikepunye Pohamba and the former President Sam Nujoma. A Joint Communiqué released after the visit, stated:

It was noted that there is a recurring reactionary debate around the need to reduce the dominance of former liberation (sic!) movements on the African continent. In this regard the emergence of counter revolutionary forces to reverse the social, political and economical gains that have been made under the leadership of our liberation movements was discussed. – *Joint Communiqué SWAPO & ANC 9 Dec 2008*

In his 'Letter from the President', Jacob Zuma after his return summarised and repeated part of the deliberations in the following way:

Ruling parties often go through certain challenges after the first decade, when the interests of different strands within the broad liberation movement begin to diverge. People begin to explore other avenues, especially when they feel they are losing control and influence within the movement. The interests of people outside the movement, locally or internationally would also come into play. [...] Political analysts and all who claim to know Africans better than they know themselves tell us that it is good for Africa and democracy if the majority of former liberation movements was reduced. How do we as former liberation movements ensure that we do not steer away from our mandate of serving the poor and all our people, in the current climate of counter-revolution? (Zuma 2008).

The answer would actually be an easy one – simply by showing that the former liberation movements continue to provide the best policy choices for the majority of the people. This could be a truly alternative, emancipatory window of opportunity, by seeking to meet the promises evoked during the ‘struggle days’ among the colonised majority. Instead, views like the ones expressed by Zuma and his comrades seem to suggest that there is under no circumstances any inclination to vacate again the once occupied centres of political power, even if an electorate – as in the case of Zimbabwe – would vote for a political alternative due to the lack of delivery. A democratic process with such a result would be considered as tantamount to an illegitimate regime change initiated by externally influenced and (mis-) guided elements willing to sabotage the project for social, economic and political emancipation, over which the erstwhile liberation movements claim to hold a monopoly. Any attacks on the liberation movement in power border in such perspective to acts of blasphemy and are dismissed as imperialist conspiracy. The articulation of political opposition is seen as a reason to marginalise, exclude and coerce those with dissenting views as a legitimate response by those in power. Instead, they could opt for a better policy, which convinces the people that they deserve to remain in political control by means of obtaining the majority votes in free and fair elections as a result of a sound policy in the interest of the people and an electoral campaign without restraints for and repression of anyone.

LIBERATION STRUGGLES AS STRUGGLES OF APPROPRIATION

The Indian psychologist and sociologist Ashis Nandy (1984), discusses how agencies and individuals perceived as part of a project of liberation tend to reproduce the past rather than offer true alternatives. In this light, the ‘anti-imperialist’ Robert Mugabe turns out to be another kind of disguised caretaker of the mindset kindled and fostered by the ‘civilising mission’ and its kind of policies. His concept of power shows affinities to that of the former colonial empire and earlier practices of acting in the ‘national security interest’. Forms of coercion continue in a similar mould to that under the settler colonial repression executed by the regime of Ian Smith. Armed combat created new repressive institutions of the state for and subsequently used by the dominant group occupying the commanding heights against the population in the aftermath of colonial rule.

Moeletsi Mbeki (himself a beneficiary of new business opportunities provided to so-called previously disadvantaged) ended his critical deliberations on the post-Apartheid ‘architects of poverty’ with the conclusion, that the emerging African elites are with few exceptions a parasitic class. They appropriate wealth through access to national assets they are selling to others and:

[H]ave no sense of ownership of their country and are not interested in its development. They view the country primarily as a cash cow that enables them to live extravagantly ... as they attempt to mimic the lifestyles of the colonialists. ... With the lack of ownership goes the pillaging of resources, neglect of the welfare of the people, corruption, capital flight and, ultimately, brutality against dissenting voices (Mbeki 2009: 174).

Sadly enough, there is nothing more positive to add. Taking note of African National Congress (ANC) Youth League President Julius Malema's speech in Harare on 3 April 2010 seems to make the point when he states:

We want the mines. They have been exploiting our minerals for a long time. Now it's our turn to also enjoy from these minerals. They are so bright, they are colourful, we refer to them as white people, maybe their colour came as a result of exploiting our minerals and perhaps if some of us can get opportunities in these minerals we can develop some nice colour like them (*Sunday Times* 4 April 2010).

Such pseudo-radical populist rhetoric seeks to detract from the fact that nationalisation of this kind is merely a disguise for the class interest by those in control over the state with the intention to privatise the assets for their individual gains only. Moeletsi Mbeki sensibly observes that this appropriation strategy goes hand in hand with an authoritarianism, which ends in 'brutality against dissenting voices'.

Dealing with Malema's provocative and controversial role, the social movement activist Mphutlane wa Bofelo (2010) pointed to the fact, that 'the political, social and economic conduct and morality of a person is not ultimately informed by his or her "race" and that our judgement of what is morally and politically unacceptable should not be the race or gender of a culprit and victim.' When the new elite, claiming to be in direct descent of the struggle aristocracy, seeks to provide such testimony by singing the songs of the past, this:

[I]s not a reflection of how attached they are to the struggle, but an attempt to locate the struggle literally in the past. They want us to believe that the struggle is over, that all we have is remnants of the old order against whom our anger should be vented. In this way, the political elite sidetracks us from singing about the current dislocation of water and electricity, the ruthless and violent eviction of shack dwellers by the red ants, the vicious police attack on service delivery protesters, the financial exclusion of students, the kleptomaniac proclivities of the new political and economic elite, the advent of black colonialists, attacks on the freedom of media, the massive acts of de-politicisation, de-historicization of our struggle and concerted efforts towards de-memorialisation (wa Bofelo 2010).

THE ANTI-DEMOCRATIC LEGACY OF VIOLENCE

Violence takes its toll on all sides and affects, if not shapes, the political and institutional structures among those who resort to resistance for liberation from oppression – only to resort to repressive forms of control among themselves. Former Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) activist Yezid Sayigh (1977) argued that this was also happening in the Palestinian liberation movement. Such power structures often revolve around individual commanders who act to the benefit of their crony supporters.

Resistance movements normally adopt rough survival strategies and techniques while fighting an oppressive regime. That culture, unfortunately, takes root and is permanently nurtured. All summed up, it becomes questionable whether there is a truly fundamental difference between the political systems they manage to have thrown out and what they establish in that place. The justification for the legitimacy of the new regime lies primarily not in being democratically elected but in having fought the armed struggle, which liberated the masses. As another PLO analyst concluded, the organisation's legitimacy to represent the Palestine people:

[S]temmed from the armed struggle the PLO had launched in its early phase. These leaders presented themselves as the fighters for the national struggle, as the custodians of the national rights, and as the healers who can rejuvenate the nation and who know what is good for the people. Thus, the leadership employed its nationalist credentials and the achievements from the revolutionary years as the basis of its political legitimacy. Indeed, they perceived themselves as capable of meeting the national aspirations and of translating them into the tangible reality of independence and liberty, and the people perceived them as the most trusted agent for the management of their destinies (Ezbidi 2006: 63f.).

For South Africa, Suttner (2006 and 2009) thus argues that the liberation movement is a prototype of a state within the state – one that sees itself as the only legitimate source of power, which includes intolerance to any form of political opposition. But he also carefully seeks to explain how the anti-pluralist factor remained largely unnoticed within the underground structures. These cloaked individual, independent minded thinking guided by maybe dissenting moral values, under a collective, which used hardly democratic centralism as a guiding principle to ensure maximum discipline and loyalty as a prerequisite for the survival and ultimate victory (Suttner 2008). As he suggests, the liberation organisation represented a distinct notion of family. There was a general suppression of 'the personal' in favour of 'the collective'. Individual judgement (and thereby autonomy) was substituted by a collective decision from the leadership. Such 'warrior culture, the militarist tradition', according to Suttner

(2008: 119), 'entailed not only heroic acts but also many cases of abuse and power'.

Suttner also delivered the prestigious Harold Wolpe Memorial Lecture in early November 2005 at academic centres in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, during which he admitted 'I have said things in this paper I would not have said 20 years ago or, in some cases, until very recently' (Suttner 2006: 26). Among these were his (self-) critical reflections on unity and pluralism within the dominant discourse of the hegemonic rule of the former anti-colonial organisation (the ANC) now controlling and representing the state. As he observes, this form of applied 'patriotic history,' which defiantly refuses to acknowledge any meaningful and legitimate opposition, equates the 'national liberation movement' with the nation emerging. It is an exclusive, all-embracing concept. Suttner (2006: 24) qualified the dominant narrative as:

[A] language of unity and a language that *tends to represent the unified people as embodied in the liberation movement organisation and then equates them with the people as a whole*. [...] In a sense the liberation movement depicts itself as a proto-state. This notion derives from a framework of ideas in which the seizure of the state was represented as the central issue of the day (original emphasis).

He maintained, that:

[I]t is important, as part of the nation we are building, to acknowledge without qualification that people have the right to organise in a variety of sectors, linked to or in opposition to the government of the day. No political organisation can represent every sectoral interest and it is important that such sectoral organisations exist. No one should be discouraged from becoming involved in such activity or depicted as disloyal for doing so (Suttner 2006: 25).

CONCLUSION

While the challenge today is not to overthrow legitimate political systems and structures by illegitimate means, the task at hand is to improve society in favour of more justice, equality and humanity. There is wide scope in any given society of this world for such efforts – not least among those in Southern Africa. The late Dennis Brutus, a famous scholar-poet-activist, who in his early 80s lost the battle against cancer in December 2009, had been involved for decades in the social struggles against Apartheid and for true emancipation. Already at the turn of the century he shared his disappointment over the policy in the post-Apartheid society. His words remind us that the struggle is far from over (Brutus 2005: 87):

Forgive me, comrades, if I say something apolitical
and shamefully emotional but in the dark of night
it is as if my heart is clutched by a giant iron hand:
'Treachery, treachery' I cry out thinking of you, comrades
and how you have betrayed the things we suffered for.
(23 August 2000)

Sovereignty, self-determination and the challenges of nation building in contemporary Africa

Olayode Kehinde Olusola

INTRODUCTION

In an era of strong group feelings, where 'nationalism' stands as a paramount value, the precise boundaries of a 'nation' remain under debate. Should each 'people' or 'nation' enjoy a right to sovereign independence? Can a multi-ethnic or multi-national state survive in the face of conflicting group claims for power? The rapid collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and ethnically based conflicts simmering in such widely separated countries as Sri Lanka, Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, Nigeria, among others, demonstrated the durability of ethnic awareness as bases for political tension (Welch 1995: 108–109).

Contrary to the scenarios of global integration, nationalism has not weakened in global society, but has, in fact, gained strength. National feelings are rooted in the idea of a linguistic, religious, and psychological community based on the ancient kinship of the members of a given ethnic group. In recent years, many groups that constitute minorities in their states have invoked the 'right to self-determination' in their demands for autonomy – or, in some cases, secession – and have resorted to violence to pursue their aims. These groups typically justify their demand for self-determination as a way to end years of repression and human rights violations by the majority ethnic groups or the central governments. The absence of a precise definition of what the right to self-determination entails has left the international community, and the states concerned, without guiding principles with which to respond (Hussein 2002: 9–11).

The claims of nations within colonial territorial boundaries in Africa were largely ignored during the decolonisation process. Most African countries had limited choices at independence; many would have recouped the losses to colonialism at the independence transition, by picking up their respective sovereignties and ethnic independence and walked away their respective ways. Elsewhere, the euphoria attending independence attainment intoxicated African activists and leaders of the day: they could not or would not see reality – the unworkable and broken structures they were soon to receive from retiring colonialists. The colonial masters, up till today, are still insisting on the borders they

drew for Africa at the Berlin Conference (Munene 2010: 178-181). African countries were so excited about independence that Africans accepted the flawed structures and imposed borders, without question. Many of the conflicts in Africa today are a result of nations seeking a greater degree of self-determination within a larger territorially based state.

At present, a tension exists between the right of self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity of the sovereign state. Self-determination, which is predicated on the notion of giving individuals more control of their lives, could also imply claims to independent sovereign states. This conflicts with the long-standing understanding that international borders are inviolable (De Silva Wijeyeratne & Beard 2010: 12-13).

Therefore, in dealing with sovereignty and self-determination, one is focusing on one of the most emotional issues in both contemporary Africa and international human rights debates. The legal interpretation of self-determination and the place of the individual versus the group in human rights discourses remain items of serious contention. Ethnic groups seeking to empower themselves collide with the desire of states to maintain centralised control. Thus, pluralism, far from being viewed as an essential building block and a safeguard for competitive democracy, is perceived as a weapon of potential destruction.

This chapter attempts to answer the following questions: What economic and political rights can 'people' claim? How can they achieve self-determination within the context of an existing 'state'? Is self-determination compatible with the legal framework of a nation-state? This chapter argues that the strong focus on the state as a core and only unit of analysis is inadequate for the realities of contemporary African politics. Similarly, trying to sustain policies based on unreconstructed, traditional, ethnically and linguistically based notions of nation-state nationalism will also lead to unbridled ethno-nationalism with painful social, political and economic consequences. Thus, there is a need for political vision and statesmanship, capable of dousing tensions generated from ethno-nationalist diversities, and thereby developing a political community where equality and justice prevail.

SOVEREIGNTY AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

The right to self-determination has become one of the most complex issues for international laws and the international community at large. Confusion over the issue stems not so much from whether a right to self-determination exists, which is included in many international human rights documents, but from the failure of those documents to define exactly who is entitled to claim this right – a group, a people, or a nation – and what exactly the right confers. At

the same time, the international system, particularly in the post-World War II era, has steadfastly defended the inviolability of existing nation-states' borders, regardless of how and when they were determined.

Self-determination is the right of people to determine their own political status and economic, social and cultural development. Sovereignty is the ultimate and independent authority over a defined territory. Both are distinct concepts, but appear closely linked within the UN Charter, in which self-determination encompasses the right to an independent state, and therefore sovereignty (Knop 2002: 108–109).

In many respects, the United Nations (UN) is a realist system, based on realist tenets. Self-determination may be necessary for state-making, but, once achieved, there is little interest in a nation continuing to reinforce its worth. In fact, the two principles appear to be far more dichotomous than complementary. The state is unitary: whole rather than the sum of constituent parts. Realist thought postulates that states conduct their foreign policy solely in response to international pulls and pushes, and not to further domestic ends. Self-determination movements challenge this singularity. They understand the contradiction between states' rights and the rights of minorities, which pose difference and diversity. Inherently, then, the notion of self-determination, with its suggestion of multiple forms of power and governance, is a direct challenge to state's sovereignty (De Silva Wijeyeratne & Beard 2010: 11–13).

Contemporary international society is an evolution of the European society of states, which, in turn, grew out of what was regarded as the universal Christian society of medieval Europe. The transformation of Christian international society into European international society was an outcome of the changing structures of political power in Europe and the intellectual challenges of the period. The reformation weakened the political and moral legitimacy of the Universal Church and the Holy Roman Empire, and subsequently also challenged the idea of a single moral authority in the political community. At the same time, the notion of political sovereignty and a conception of the state exercising exclusive jurisdiction over a territory and its inhabitants were becoming clearer. According to the conventional interpretation of international society, the Westphalian Peace Treaties constituted for the first time an international society in which the criss-crossing relations between diverse feudal conflict-units and the hierarchical claims of Empire and Papacy were, at least in Europe, superseded by formal relations (Jackson 2000: 34–38).

Through the Westphalian settlement of 1648 that inaugurated the modern system of states based on the principle of territorial sovereignty, central rulers consolidated their exclusive sovereignty by controlling the instruments of foreign policy; namely, the armed forces, diplomacy and treaty-making. International relations became institutionalised in permanent embassies, coordinating international affairs through regular diplomatic intercourse.

Territorial sovereignty had repressed the independence of the nobility to act legitimately as autonomous war-lords, blurring any clear distinction between domestic and international spheres. Central rulers arrogated the means of violence to themselves and established bounded territories. As a result, the field of politics was formally differentiated into distinct domestic and international spheres based on an internal political hierarchy and an external geopolitical anarchy (Bull 1970: 10–13).

After the Westphalian settlement, non-sovereign lords and other corporate actors ‘dropped out’ of international relations in Europe. At the same time, territorial sovereignty and the discourse of *raison d'état* secularised international relations by undermining the power of religion as the dominant mode of legitimacy, and in particular, by curtailing the universal ambitions of the Roman Catholic Church. The separation between international politics and religion entailed the recognition of the peaceful coexistence between legally equal members of international society.

Self-determination as a political force in international society is a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging in the aftermath of World War I and the breakup of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires as a demand of national groups seeking to divide territory. President Woodrow Wilson was the statesman most closely identified with the self-determination principle, though ironically the term does not appear in his ‘Fourteen Points’ speech. While he referred to minority rights within a larger state, he hardly mentioned the establishment of new, independent states (Hannum 2006: 68–70).

At a time when ethnic groups are striving to affirm their nationhood – and their statehood in the international arena – more established states react to the principle of self-determination with extreme suspicion. Some seem to believe that today’s political map of the world constitutes a final global configuration. Determining exactly who (or what) the right of self-determination applies to remains its most disputed aspect. In the post-World War II era, it has been more or less commonly accepted that the right to self-determination applies only to colonies, which filled the ranks of the UNas full-fledged states during the wave of decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s (Starovoitova 1997: 6–8).

The injustice of the colonial system led the UN General Assembly on 14 December 1960, to adopt the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, whose preamble emphasises that the refusal or obstruction of freedom brings about the intensification of conflicts. Article 2 of the UN Charter states, ‘All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development (UN Charter, 1960: Article 2).

However, established principles of international law pose a much more fundamental problem in the realisation of the concept of self-determination: the contradiction between the principle of self-determination and the principle of

inviolable borders of sovereign states (i.e. the maintenance of a state's territorial integrity).

The two most important international legal documents of the postcolonial period in this regard are the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966. Article 1, identical in both documents, repeats a basic idea of the 1960 Declaration on Decolonisation: 'All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development (ICCPR and ICESCR, 1966: Article 1).

The Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the UN Charter adopted in 1970 by the UN General Assembly reveals the contradiction between self-determination movements and the territorial integrity of existing states. In contrast to the covenants of 1966, the 1970 declaration gives precedence to the principle of territorial integrity over self-determination:

Nothing in the foregoing paragraphs shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as described above and thus possessed of a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction as to race, creed, or colour (Starovoitova 1997: 6–8).

International law recognises no 'right to self-determination' for the purpose of unilateral secession from an existing sovereign nation-state. Rather, the legality and likelihood of success of an independence movement is mainly determined by: (i) the constitution and domestic law of the existing state; (ii) negotiations and agreements between the central authorities of the existing state and the fractions seeking independence; and (iii) the attitude of the existing state. Foreign interventions in the form of precipitate recognition, or foreign withholding of recognition, may also affect the outcome of an independence movement, although the influence of the attitude of other nations may be limited.

In fact, secession as an outcome is clearly in conflict with the principle of territorial integrity, which has a clear prior place in the norm. Both the Decolonisation and 1970 Declarations establish self-determination explicitly with the caveat that its exercise should not disrupt territorial integrity. The 1960 Decolonisation Declaration states that 'any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (U.N 1960: A/4684).

It must be emphasised that self-determination need not always be expressed by establishing an independent state. Self-determination can also be achieved within the nation-state through varying degrees of regional and local autonomy which guarantee meaningful political participation and equitable economic, cultural and social development. In other words, we should be more concerned with the essence and substance of self-determination, rather than the political form of a nation state (Agnew 2009: 26–27).

SELF-DETERMINATION AND SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICAN CONTEXT

As a matter of political realism, after independence, African governments were virtually unanimous in agreeing that respect for existing European-delineated boundaries should be a guiding principle in inter-African relations; it was felt that any attempt to redraw them could plunge these states into internecine conflicts. The wisdom of this principle was universally acknowledged. However, over time it has been extended to rule out even those territorial changes that may originate from conflicts internal to individual states. In other words, the principle of respect for the geographical status quo is now expected to proscribe not only irredentist demands at the level of inter-state relations, but also secessionist attempts by purely domestic groups (Ali 2004:12–14).

Although, fear of destabilisation based on ethnicity did not result in a 'United States of Africa'; it did result in creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and a pledge to maintain the inherited status quo. The OAU, now transformed into the African Union (AU), has from its inception, taken strong stands against revising borders or dividing states, in order to accommodate 'sub-national' claims. Among its principles are preservation of unity within inherited frontiers, unreserved condemnation of plotting against sister states, and respect for sovereign equality (Welch 1995: 108–109).

It was important for the peace and stability of the whole continent to embrace the political and legal concept of territorial integrity and sovereignty. The right to self-determination was understood simply under the principles of decolonisation and the non-intervention in the internal affairs of each member state of the OAU; despite the fact that certain ethnic, religious or cultural groups were trapped within the new boundaries. This position was in conformity with the OAU Charter and subsequent policy declarations particularly the Cairo Resolution of 1964 by heads of state of the union.

At the Cairo summit, the OAU reaffirms the notion of inviolability of the colonial borders, and it became a very important principle of the organisation to the present day, which the world also recognise and reinforced. From international law perspective and the constitutive act, the OAU seems to oppose any attempt at the partial or total disruption of the territorial integrity of member

states. Moreover, the political and legal concept is included to protect the territorial framework of member states so as to prevent a rule permitting secession from independence states (David 2004: 19–21).

The Cairo Resolution was motivated by boundary conflicts in early 1963 between Somalia and Ethiopia and Kenya. Somalia had attempted to exercise the right of self-determination for Somalis living in Ethiopia and Kenya. This claim was rejected by the former OAU in favour of Ethiopia's contention that a claim for self-determination in the postcolonial context was unacceptable. As early as 1969, OAU and many African countries had taken side with the central government of Nigeria against the Biafra secessionist movement.

At independence, almost all existing African states risked complete disintegration if the integrity of its international boundaries was questioned. Once the right to secede and establish an independent state is granted to one people within the state in question, it is feared that other peoples might make a similar claim, thereby dismembering the existing state, and probably leading to its total disintegration. In addition, since another part of the same people who are demanding secession from one existing state may be within the boundaries of a neighbouring state, granting the demand of the first part may encourage the other part to demand to join their people, thereby threatening the territorial integrity of the neighbouring state as well.

The African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) is currently the only regional human rights instrument that permits the right of self-determination to be the subject matter of communications submitted by entities other than states. The right to self-determination is one of the most important and perhaps controversial rights enshrined in the ACHPR because it is the vehicle through which many African states achieved independence from colonialism. Even today, many ethnic groups continue to use self-determination to make claims for self-rule. These postcolonial claims of self-determination have put pressure on the Commission to define the scope of this right in Africa (Maghraoui, 2003: 115–117).

Moreover, the AU practice under its predecessor OAU regarding the entertainment of the constitutive act of the AU does not expressly grant all the people of Africa the right to self-determination. The African Charter on the Human and People's Right of 1981 affirms the right of all people to the inalienable right to self-determination. Furthermore, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981 not only affirms the right of 'all peoples' to 'the unquestionable and inalienable right' to self-determination, but also specifies some of the implications of that right in a number of Articles. This is particularly significant for our present purpose because, as a document drafted and adopted by members of the OAU and now by the AU, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, carries political and moral weight with all African states, regardless of whether or not they are legally bound by this Charter (Nnoli 2003:24–26).

Furthermore, the AU is intended to be a regional agency within the meaning of the UN Charter and since, all the signatory of the constitutive act are also members of the AU with the exception of Morocco. Article 1(2) of the UN charter stated as one of the organisational purposes, is promoting friendly relationship among states based on the principle of self-determination. Subsequent practice within the UN regards the right of self-determination as a political and legal concept in the understanding of international law. By implication, the constitutive act of the AU implicitly recognises the right of self-determination as a principle which is inalienable to all people and guarantees them the right to freely determine their political, social and economic status.

But the most vital question is the scope and application of self-determination implied in the constitutive act of the AU. Is it only the internal right of self-determination that is recognised as a general principle of law – or does it also extends to external right of self-determination? In other words, does the principle of self-determination also include the right to secession under the Constitutive Act of the AU? Does the constitutive act of the AU exceptionally allow the right to secession?

To begin with, the constitutive act of the AU under its objectives states that one of its organisational targets is defending the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states. The most relevant phrase for this particular case is the political and international legal concept of territorial integrity. Territorial integrity is understood to mean the land, water and airspace over which a state has jurisdiction and control. In order to implement this objective, the constitutive act of the AU incorporated a basic and relevant supplementary principle which states that the AU shall function in accordance with the principle of ‘respect of borders existing on achievement of independence’. This provision is intended to maintain the boundary agreement that existed at the time of independence so as to prevent future disputes among AU member states.

To start with, the OAU discouraged secessionist movements, given the weakness of those states and the confusion that could have resulted from their secession given that other African states were only then coming into existence. At a meeting of the OAU in 1964, whose final declaration ‘solely declares that all Member States pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence’ even though the context is very different after 50 years.

AU seems to oppose any attempt at the partial or total disruption of the territorial integrity of member states. Moreover, the political and legal concept is included to protect the territorial framework of member states so as to prevent a rule permitting secession from independent states from arising.

AU perception on the issue of the right of self-determination was very narrow. The right of self-determination, in the African context, meant decolo-

nisation, not the right of different national or ethnic groups to have a country of their own. An example is the Western Sahara case which arose out of decolonisation a territory controlled by Spain as a colonial power but subject to irredentist claims by Morocco and Mauritania. OAU and the International Court of Justice advisory opinion stand are treating the Western Sahara case as decolonisation (Roussellier 2005: 316–317).

It is fair to say that it is the basic objective of the constitutive act of the AU to maintain the territorial integrity of its member states and as such no right to secede exists explicitly from a parent state. However, there are three exceptional circumstances under which the right to self-determination, including the right to secession, is allowed under the constitutive act of the AU, by assimilating it as a regional agency within the meaning of the UN charter and a general principle of law. The first exception is colonisation. In case of colonisation, the right to claim independence and sever links with the colonial power is granted without hesitation and debate. A good example was the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia and the recent independence of South Sudan. The OAU doctrine of respect for territorial integrity was for the first time reversed in 1993. Eritrea's secession was admitted as it occurred along the colonial lines conforming to the doctrine and by referendum agreed by the government of the larger unit, Ethiopia.

The guiding principle in solving the Sudan/Southern Sudan problem is self determination: the right of an indigenous people to choose their own politics – no matter what. The process is; agreement on this principle; cessation of hostilities, cooling-off period during which there is pseudo-separation in the form of real political autonomy for the aggrieved parties for a duration; a binding credible Referendum after the stipulated period, to determine the will and intent of the people regarding their desired status; and finally, the principled implementation of the Referendum results. The entire process has the support, and is under the supervision, of most if not all stakeholders, including the UN and various other regional and multilateral organisations. Of course, the principal parties have to be cooperative, determined and committed to the entire process. This is a historic and innovative reinterpretation of the right of self-determination including the right to secession.

THE CHALLENGES OF NATION BUILDING IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

The Nationalist revolution of the twentieth century has the fundamental aim to affirm and assert the right to self determination and independence, that is, the right of a people to a homeland that they could collectively call their own; a homeland endowed with national rights to sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and safeguarded by a united, free and indomitable peo-

ple or citizenry that embodies nationhood. This is the major achievement of the twentieth century.

The end of the twentieth century marks the triumph of the struggle for the right to self-determination and independence. The challenge of the twenty-first century is how to translate the right to self-determination and independence into a capacity to build an African nation with a self-reliant economy that could guarantee the civil political economic social cultural and ecological right of the African people. The crises of the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century confirm that the right to self-determination and independence is not achieved once and for all. Without consolidating the people's civil and political rights, crises cannot be avoided. Likewise, without building an economy that would promote the prosperity and social welfare of the sovereign people, civil and political crisis would undermine the sovereignty of the nation-state (Jega, 2004: 23–25).

The decades after independence have brought home the grim reality of the failure of the strongly centralised states that emerged following decolonisation. They were 'tried and found wanting'¹⁸ (Wunsci & Olowu 1990: 23). By the 1980s, it was clear that the 'centralised' and over-extended 'state' had become severely weakened, in some instances to the point of near collapse. The state sought to impose itself on most aspects of social life, but succeeded nowhere. In Angola, Mozambique, Sudan, and Ethiopia, large areas were administered independently outside the reach of the state. In Uganda and Chad in the 1980s, and Somalia, Sierra-Leone and Liberia in the 1990s, the 'state' disintegrated or came close to it. Relative to the tasks they promised to accomplish, governments fell short. Their rhetorical promises far out-stripped their actual performance.

Many negative consequences flowed from over-emphasising the personalities, institutions and interests of the 'state'. Authoritarian African regimes failed to protect human rights, foster economic development, or promote national integration. Hence, it became increasingly clear that the failure of the state necessitated moving to a new paradigm. A shift in emphasis to the 'grass-roots', rather than the 'elites' of the 'states', has thus become the focus of policy and scholarly attention (Olayode 2006: 23).

The widely noted statist inclinations of elites following independence were a result of various factors: public expectations of material benefits from the anti-colonial struggle, the new ruling elites' preference for state action, concern over national integration, and an apparent lack of viable alternatives. Africa's new rulers, anxious to overcome the inheritance of colonial neglect and economic dependence, looked upon the centralised state as a solution to the many economic and social problems facing them (Olayode 2004: 15). It was to become apparent, however, that state intervention in the economy often had the effect of diverting wealth away from small farmers and rural provinces and into dubi-

ous state-run projects in the urban centres. This misallocation of scarce public resources set the development process back significantly.

Over time, as African economies deteriorated and state institutions lost legitimacy and a sense of purpose, the routines of state-society relations were disrupted. Economic deterioration increased state weakness (that is, the inability of the state to regulate society and to implement public policies in an effective manner) and societal demands on the state. Though perceived as the key distributor of resources, the state lacked the capacity to satisfy public demands. Overstaffed, over bureaucratised, and itself a major consumer of scarce revenues, the state found itself unable to implement its own developmental programmes, particularly in the hinterland (Wunsci & Olowu 1990: 45). The states built on colonial architecture were not also designed to address the second phase of National Liberation that is to create a people who are not divided or excluded by colour, ethno-linguistic origin, linguistic characteristics, religion or gender.

The struggle for genuine democracy in Africa started immediately after 'political' independence was won. It was realised by the radical democratic nationalists who were excluded in government that the new inheritors of power had no intention of fulfilling the 'promises of the nationalist struggle' (Olayode 2010: 17). They watched helplessly as the hope and optimism of independence faded slowly and inexorably in the hands of the new political elite, and was finally eclipsed by the dark shadows of corruption, lawlessness, ineptitude, distortion and repression. Many people came to see independence as a sort of 'punishment', which brought nothing but misery, pain, dashed hopes, terror, exploitation, marginalisation and frustrations. Conditions of living deteriorated and many began to look at the colonial era with nostalgia. Nationalists of yesterday became ruthless dictators, life presidents and little 'gods' of today, and hopes for a better future receded into the distant future. At this point, women, students, workers, the unemployed, and professionals began to call for a true and second '*uhuru*'.

Thus, the crisis of nation building in Africa today is a fall-out of the failure of the neo-colonial state to live up to the people's expectations of independence, including the fulfilment of their basic human needs. The failure of the national project lies behind the crisis of legitimacy of the African state. It is evidenced in the total inability of the elites to build hegemony and promote national unity; the failure to resolve minority issues; promote development in the rural areas; provide infrastructure and basic needs; and democratise the political landscape. This failure also encouraged the withdrawal of support from the 'state', and facilitated the emergence of an opposition culture. The inability of the political elites to promote development and resolve the numerous contradictions of underdevelopment encouraged military coups and counter coups, ethnic and

religious conflicts, and the steady withdrawal of the people from the state, its institutions and agents.

The need to work out modalities and to reach a consensus for the evolution of a just and equitable basis, through which the diverse ethnic groups in Africa can unite and pursue a common destiny of national development in their respective state is the major challenge of nation building in Africa. It not only involves the territorial integrity of the state, power sharing and management of resources in terms of access, control and distribution, but also encompasses the issues of minority interests, ethnicity, citizenship, revenue allocation, creation of states and local governments as well as religious, linguistic, cultural and educational policies.

The struggle for control of the prime position at the centre is always a source of 'unusual conflict.' And in the absence of any ideology, political leaders often take refuge in ethnicity, both for mobilisation and relevance. The national question in Africa can therefore, be located in structural geo-political defects, poor leadership, ethnicity, and indiscipline. The scope of the national question can also be expanded to include federalism, economic self-determination, equity, the rule of law, justice, and fair play.

Equal rights and privileges, access to power and equitable share of national resources are the 'baits that can guarantee a firm order of relations between the different ethnic, linguistic and cultural groupings' (Olayode 2009: 12). The state still remains the object of struggle for wealth, for recognition, and for local as well as international reputation, and to that effect, the national question in Africa can be located within the political economy context.

MANAGING SELF-DETERMINATION CONFLICTS IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

The main challenge of nationbuilding in Africa is to establish democratic institutions, which will ensure that neither the majority nor the minority are threatened with permanent exclusion from power and resources for development. While democratic states suffer from conflict just as others do and the presence of democracy not a guarantee of a society without political violence, democratic societies tend to develop the institutions, resources and flexibility, in the long-term, to peacefully manage these kinds of conflicts. Neither democracy nor democratisation is without contradictions in as much as they entail the 're-distribution of power'; they indeed have an inherent potential for conflict. But democracy can also be understood as a system for the peaceful management of conflicts. It provides a non-violent method for selecting leaders, a forum through which different viewpoints can be represented, and an opportunity for inclusive participation (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 15–17).

The democratic revolution of the 21st century has the fundamental aim to affirm and assert the sovereignty of the people, and ensure that one is embodied with equal power to determine how one's destiny is to be managed for fullest realisation and protection of one's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights to sustainable development. Africa is beginning to put the democratic revolution on its historical agenda in order to reposition herself to attain a dignified and equal station with all other nations on the face of the globe. The thinkers, inventors and builders of a new Africa must be ready to articulate the demands of the democratic revolution and foster the final march of the African people to create an Africa of liberty, dignity and property for her people (Zartman 2000: 15–17).

Therefore, a realistic approach to the lingering national question in Africa is the consolidation of democracy as a means of nation building. Democracy thus enhances national integration, which is not only a flattening process of assimilation, but also embodies equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual peaceful co-existence, tolerance and forbearance among constituent peoples of a state. Democratic institutions should in principle, be capable of handling the issues of the national question, even when they are characterised by extreme violence (Kahler 2002: 17).

Ethnic groups do not limit their claims to autonomy. They also seek power. That is, they compete for some degree of control over the state itself. Numerous minorities tend to organise themselves politically and to participate in regular electoral processes. By acting as political contenders, minorities do not limit their claims to parliamentary representation but they seek access to government positions that is, the central decision-making power. That is, minority groups seek to share power with the dominant majority. Power sharing arrangements are a potential means of solving self-determination conflicts. They aim to promote practices and institutions, which, in one way or another, aim to satisfy all major ethnic groups in society. In this way such arrangements attempt to reconcile the potentially divisive principles of self-determination and democracy in ethnically divided states (Ibeanu 2003: 14–15).

Nation building requires the building of instruments and institutions with the participation of the people. It is necessary for a civil and political order to emerge by involving the sovereign people in the drafting and adoption of a National Constitution whose content should guarantee the sovereignty of the people and ensure that governments exist for the people, and not the people for government. It should ensure that the right of each to represent or be represented is guaranteed without any form of discrimination. It should guarantee fundamental rights to speech assembly and association. It should guarantee equality before just laws and forbid impunity (Duruji 2008: 79–82).

Social policy should ensure the provision of quality health services in the preventive curative restorative or rehabilitative domain. Education, at the early

childhood level, primary, secondary and tertiary level should be made accessible and affordable and should be relevant to prepare young people to be thinkers, inventors and builders of a civilisation that is fit for them to live in. Education should enable the people to know their history, transform their knowledge into a way of life reflecting in both social relations and in arts and other forms of leisure. The education system should prepare the young for the general division of labour in society, develop the power of their mind and facilitate their acculturation into sovereign citizens with intellect, character, skills and values that empower them for nation building (Amin 2004: 24).

It goes without saying that the failure to create a sovereign people has given rise to fragmentation of states along ethnic, regional, kinship and family ties and interest groups that do not put national interest before personal interest. This is giving rise to the concentration of power and wealth in the same hands which fuel conflict and war, thus negating the task of nation building. Africa will only be stable if the people are made sovereign and if they truly control power.

CONCLUSION

At the dawn of the second decade of the twenty-first century, self-determination claims remain a major threat to international order. Contemporary international society promotes two principles of world order that are difficult to reconcile with one another, the territorial sovereignty of states and the self-determination of nations. As self-determination movements persist and proliferate, states and the international community, continue to be faced with the intractable difficulty of finding adequate and suitable responses.

The chapter has undertaken a critical analysis of sovereignty and self-determination in contemporary Africa. Its central aim was to increase understanding of how self-determination conflicts are being addressed in a contemporary context. Since the end of decolonisation, it has become clear that the diplomatic compromises that facilitated the transfer of political authority during that era are now obsolete. Today, the principle of self-determination lacks both definition and applicability. Saving it from a complete descent into incoherence will require a renewal of the links between autonomy, democracy, human rights and the right to self-determination. Central to cultivating this renewal should be the adoption of a more liberal and expansive interpretation of the meaning of self-determination. Self-determination does not have to mean irredentism; secession and the violent renegotiation of territorial frontiers. The promotion of minority rights, democracy, devolution, federalism social and political justice, and greater acknowledgment of the legitimacy of cultural self-expression should all be the expressions of self-determination (Dunbar 2000: 519–521).

In view of the absence of a sustained focus on the problem of self-determination within contemporary international relations theory, the society of states must show more imagination in seeking ways to transcend the links between territorial sovereignty, nationalism and self-determination. When applied without criteria and limitations, it ends up producing devastating results. We must continue to respect the principle of self-determination, but as a relative, not absolute, value. While the international community is not equipped to rule on whether any group is actually a 'people', it can evaluate and set limits on the means by which putative peoples pursue their claimed rights to self-determination. Similarly, the principle of territorial sovereignty is important, but it cannot be taken as absolute. State sovereignty must be limited by the rules necessary to maintain coexistence. Acceptance of limited sovereignty is the only way to make the state compatible with the existence of international interdependence, of an international order, and with internal levels of authority at the regional and local levels.

The 'northern problem'

Is pan-Africanism or regionalism the answer?

John Akokpari, Claire Price & Kristen Thompson

INTRODUCTION

The colonially imposed borders on the African continent have posed significant problems for newly established states. Striking examples include the social and cultural divisions of various groups and the inter-communal animosity and violence that have become defining features of most African states. As a response to these divisions and tendencies, the pan-African movement was formulated to create an overall African identity that will spawn unity among these various groups. Regional cooperation, integration, and African unity have been consistently echoed as goals for the African continent since the end of colonisation.

The commitment of African leaders to seeking cooperation and working toward integration has been emphasised in such efforts as the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, the 1991 Abuja Treaty, and the 2001 New Partnership for Africa's Development – NEPAD (Gibbs 2009). Additionally, by 1990, 49 African states had joined sub-regional economic communities (Asante 1997), underscoring the longstanding commitment to regional cooperation in Africa. However, in this chapter we argue that while pan-Africanism is an admirable project, the current efforts by the African Union (AU) to achieve it through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are flawed due to the strong sense of postcolonial nationalism and sovereignty in many African countries. Moreover, the current regional integration efforts in Africa mainly address economic imperatives with little efforts to accomplish political, social, or cultural integration, which are equally necessary to address the 'northern problem.' The experience of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is used to illustrate this point.

In advancing the argument above, we first offer some conceptual clarity on such key concepts as the northern problem, pan-Africanism and regionalism. Second, the chapter analyses the role of the AU and RECs in addressing the northern problem. Third, the chapter demonstrates the limitations of current pan-Africanist initiatives and regionalism in adequately addressing the northern problem, while the conclusion recaps the main arguments.

THE NORTHERN PROBLEM

The 'northern problem' is a concept which encapsulates the reality that in many postcolonial African states there exists a group, or groups, of people whose identity, whether in terms of their 'founding history', heroes, symbols or signs, differs significantly from that of the dominant ethnic group in their respective country. This idea is not termed the 'northern problem' because it necessarily occurs in the northern areas of African countries, or indeed in North Africa. More poignantly, it refers to the idea that ethnic division, and the 'Othering' of certain ethnic groups within African states can be traced back to arbitrary borders imposed on Africa by the Berlin conference. That is to say, the borders established by colonialism ruptured hitherto cohesive societies by re-parcelling them into different states and in the process re-grouping different, often mutually hostile entities into the same state. This has left African states, in the words of John Wiseman, as 'archetypal examples of "states without nations",' lacking the cultural glue to hold them together (Wiseman 1990: 14). Consequently, it has been difficult to establish a national identity as opposed to an ethnic one.

The northern problem thus often leads to secession and in other more accommodating cases, to demands for federalism. This is frequently the case where there exists a 'disgruntled' group which believes that it is being excluded, dominated or is unwanted by the dominant group in a state. Whether this is due to a lack of inclusion on national symbols of culture and identity or because of being excluded from sharing in the fruits of the state's resources, it can lead to movements for a state within a state. The effects of the Northern problem are not confined only to large and highly heterogeneous states such as Sudan or Nigeria.

On the contrary, smaller and fairly homogenous states have also had to contend with the realities of the Northern problem. The secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia, the breakaway of Somaliland from Somalia and the attempt by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to establish an independent enclave in Northern Uganda underscore the fact that the northern problem is potentially embedded in all African states irrespective of size and ethnic composition. Described by Shaw and Adibe (1995) as Afro-pessimists, the re-colonisation school admits that Africa has no hope in terms of successfully crafting solutions to its internal problems. Traditionally, pan-Africanism and regionalism have been advanced as potential solutions to the 'northern problem' and its related challenges.

Yet, although pan-Africanism and regionalism remain the oldest and currently the most popular tools for addressing the northern problem, these have been complemented with two other approaches – the re-colonisation and the reconfiguration ideas. While these have more or less fizzled out of contemporary academic debates, it is still imperative to outline, even if cursorily, their recommendations on the northern problem. The re-colonisation school, as it

came to be called, was led by pan-Africanists, notable among whom was Ali Mazrui. Essentially, it argues that in the light of the growing and seemingly intractable challenges of nation building some countries in Africa needed to be placed under some form of Trusteeship (Mazrui 1994a).

Mazrui suggested two possible forms of trusteeships: one to be under some five African countries while the other is to be under the United Nations (UN), something akin to the UN Trusteeship over Congo in the 1960s. This was imperative as some African states showed a truncated capacity to mitigate the northern problem and its associated challenges. In justifying this proposal, Mazrui argued that 'the successive collapse of the state in one African country after another during the 1990s suggests a once unthinkable solution: re-colonisation' (Mazrui 1995: 30). Following the 1994 Rwanda genocide the re-colonisation debate assumed a new height of intensity and became both the context and pretext for the arguments of its proponents (Mazrui 1994b: 18). The assumption behind the recolonisation idea was that bringing states together under one sovereign trusteeship authority would minimise divisive tendencies based on ethnicity, religion and national borders. This would be achieved as the distribution of resources in the state would no longer be done by local politicians, but rather by the trusteeship authority. However, the suggested colonisation was not one for exploitation and expropriation, but rather for reconstruction and development.

The reconfiguration school on the other hand essentially proposed the re-drawing of Africa's borders. Premised on the assumption that the placing of culturally diverse and sometimes mutually hostile entities within the same territorial boundaries was a major cause of Africa's crisis, including the 'northern problem', the redrawing of borders would mitigate this problem. Some observers suggest that while bad leadership and governance remain at the heart of Africa's developmental challenges, the crises has been exacerbated by the arbitrary borders imposed on the continent. While reconfiguration was not the ultimate panacea to the northern problem, there were certain countries that would benefit from border re-demarcation (Guest 2004; Thomas 2004).

Nigeria and Sudan, which are deeply fractured along ethnic, religious and regional lines, are singled out as potential beneficiaries of reconfiguration. For Africa the official secession of Southern Sudan from Khartoum in 2011 became the latest test of the reconfiguration school. Expectedly, a successful, stable and economically thriving Southern Sudanese state has inspired others constituents such as Darfur, Matebeleland in Zimbabwe, Barotseland in Zambia, Southern Cameroon, Cabinda and many more groups that have suffered marginalisation and oppression to agitate for autonomy.

Both the re-colonisation and reconfiguration schools have come under intense intellectual criticisms. William Pfaff offers two reasons why neither re-colonisation nor reconfiguration would effectively address the northern

problem. The first is historical. Based on the failures of the re-division of the Balkans into separate autonomous countries to install peace and stability, he argues that Africa will not be anything different. In the Balkans the re-demarcation of borders only generated wars. Thus, he concludes that 'in Africa, any attempt to redraw borders on ethnic lines would seem certain to accelerate political disintegration and inspire new conflicts' (Pfaff 1995: 3).

The second basis for pessimism on trusteeship related to the 'fatigue' of the UN. Pfaff suggests that the UN is currently financially overburdened and administratively overstretched. Hence, the World body would be most unwilling to assume any new burdens in the form of trusteeship responsibilities. Moreover, the politics within the UN system and the truism that the agenda of the organisation is set and dictated by the Security Council would make trusteeship a deeply unpopular proposal within the UN (Pfaff 1995: 4–5).

While laudable in principle, the reconfiguration idea raises a fundamental question. It failed to specify the basis upon which the new border demarcations should be based. Should these be on ethnic lines, in which case the land area of Nigeria alone will be littered with over 40 separate countries or should this be based on religious or other considerations? Even so, the implosion of the Somali state, and the perennial post-election conflicts in Lesotho – two of the most homogenous in Africa – show that reconfiguring Africa borders to correspond to ethnic identities is not necessarily a guaranteed answer to the northern problem. Critics, moreover, question the attribution of the northern problem and Africa's inability to engineer effective state building to colonialism. Ethiopia and Liberia, for example, were never formally colonised and yet have over the years battled with the northern problem in the form of violent intra-state conflicts and ethnic secessions respectively. Sceptics of the reconfiguration idea argue that the real problem in Africa may not lie with the continent's arbitrary borders. Rather, this may be the result of the inability of the postcolonial African state to manage heterogeneity. Tanzania and Zambia have maintained an appreciable degree of ethnic harmony albeit with heterogeneous characters. The reconfiguration idea is thus uncritical and less persuasive as an answer to the northern problem. Moreover, the evidence on the ground does not substantiate the assumption of the reconfiguration school linking the existing boundaries to the 'northern problem' in Africa.

For the moment the re-colonisation and reconfiguration ideas are hardly discussed; they seem to have lost their appeal in academic debates but are certain to be resurrected anytime Africa experiences a major political upheaval. This chapter, however, focuses on pan-Africanism and regionalism as solutions to the northern problem. In order to assess their viability, we turn to a detailed analysis of both concepts as well as examples of current attempts in Southern Africa to illustrate especially the limitations of regionalism in addressing the northern problem.

PAN-AFRICANISM

According to Geiss, pan-Africanism can be 'directly' traced back to the first Pan-African Conference held in London in 1900. The origins can also be traced in a more 'indirect' fashion to the literary works produced in the 'slave triangle.' This subsequently became known as the Pan-Africanism Triangle, more than 100 years prior to the conference (Geiss 1969: 187). The slave triangle was made up of the Americas, Britain and the West Coast of Africa. The abolitionist movement on both sides of the Atlantic, which also indirectly affected British West Africa, eventually led to important developments that would prove to lead to scholarly work that became the seminal work on which pan-Africanism was built.

In separate works, Geiss (1969: 187) and Mazrui (1982: 24) argue that pan-Africanism was a reaction to white imperialism and colonialism. Mazrui further argues that this reaction to racism and colonialism coupled with a notion of 'shared blackness' led, ultimately to the rise of pan-Africanism. At the core of pan-Africanism is the notion of 'shared blackness.' However, this concept should not be confused with ethnic consciousness. Essentially, the northern problem seeks to encapsulate the many problems that can be caused by diverging ethnic identities within the boundaries of a single nation state. The focus of 'shared blackness' is rather 'race solidarity' or 'race-consciousness' as well as 'shared blackness,' both of which Mazrui believes are essential for African nationalism (Mazrui 1982: 24–25). This is opposed to 'ethnic consciousness' which would prioritise solidarity with one's own creed, tribe or ethnic group over the broader peoples of a nation or the African continent or as a whole.

Despite the fact that pan-Africanism gained most of its notoriety after the Second World War, its genesis, as mentioned above, can be traced back to the work of Ottobah Cugoana and Gustavus Vassa, both freed slaves in Britain, in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Their work was continued by free Afro-American slaves, mostly ministers, from 1830 onwards. This notably led to the most prolific work on pan-Africanism at the time by W.E.B. Du Bois and later George Padmore. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the literature was dominated by West African writers, Blyden and Horton most notably (Geiss 1969: 188).

Up to this point the main focus of these early writers had been to refute the claim of racial inequality or inferiority. The main questions that were usually addressed by pan-Africanists in the early half of the twentieth century focused on Africa's right to independence as well as its rapid development via the introduction of modern techniques of development. A secondary question during this period was how to maintain African culture and society while going through rapid modernisation (Geiss 1969: 189). In line with this change in the focus of what pan-Africanism has sought to address Geiss (1969: 189–190)

defines it as 'largely African nationalism projected on a continental level and strengthened by the support of Afro-Americans in the New World'.

Makinda and Okumu posit that like many concepts in the social sciences there is no one clear definition of pan-Africanism. Citing Legum, they define pan-Africanism as 'a belief in the uniqueness of and the spiritual unity of black people; and acknowledgement of their right to self-determination in Africa, and to be treated with dignity in all parts of the world' (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 18). According to Makinda and Okumu this definition has three levels to it: first, pan-Africanism is in part concerned with the restructuring of identity. Second, it is about searching not only for inequality but also human dignity, not just in Africa but globally. Third, it is a movement that seeks to lead to 'self-government' for the peoples of Africa (Makinda & Okumu 2008).

Mazrui (1982: 25-25) distinguishes three types of pan-Africanism based on the nature of solidarity it encourages. The first kind is Sub-Saharan pan-Africanism, which envisions the solidarity of black people on the African continent south of the Sahara. The second is known as Trans-Saharan pan-Africanism, which envisions a solidarity encompassing all Africans, including those in North Africa (in other words those north of the Sahara). The third, according to Mazrui, identifies Trans-Atlantic pan-Africanism, which envisions solidarity between those on the African continent and the African Diaspora in America and the Caribbean, and so forth. He believes that the above distinctions are important for understanding the evolution of pan-Africanism. He argues that, contrary to expectations and in line with the above discussion, pan-Africanism has its roots in the African Diaspora. Thus, its foundation was less institutional and more based on a growing body of literary work which espoused the kind of 'race-consciousness' discussed above. Mazrui maintains that Trans-Atlantic pan-Africanism can be considered: 'as a movement of ideas and emotions, with little institutionalism apart from periodic conferences without a standing secretariat (Mazrui 1982: 25-25).

The Trans-Atlantic movement in turn inspired the Sub-Saharan pan-African movement to gain momentum. However, even though the race consciousness that was inspired by the Trans-Atlantic pan-Africanist movement was significant in catalysing pan-Africanism in general as well as lending momentum to the Sub-Saharan movement, true institutionalism was founded more in the Trans-Saharan movement, despite significant racial cleavages between the Northern and Southern parts of the continent (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 25-26).

Thus, the first institutionalised form of pan-Africanism, if one excludes the *ad hoc* conferences held in the first half of the twentieth century, was the establishment of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963. The OAU provided a framework for meetings of heads of state that encompassed the whole continent. Yet, it is important to distinguish between pan-Africanism

as a liberation movement on one hand and pan-Africanism as a continental integration movement on the other. Generally speaking, pan-Africanism as a liberation movement broadly focused on pushing for decolonisation of the continent as well as lobbying in the UN for the isolation of white minority regimes in Southern Africa. As a movement for integration, pan-Africanism has had varied success as African countries have sought different paths to integration (Mazrui 1982: 25–26). In this sense, the goals of pan-Africanism as a movement and the stated goals of the OAU were aligned (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 11).

Leading the call for African unity and central to the formation of the OAU was Kwame Nkrumah. He linked Pan-Africanism to identity and freedom with his self-styled concept of 'African Personality' (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 18). He argued that in order for the 'African Personality' to be 'meaningfully projected' and 'find its full expression' Africans needed to be free and Africa needed to be liberated (from colonial rule) and united. Nkrumah believed more specifically that a united Africa could be 'one of the greatest forces for good in the world' (Nkrumah 1971: xii).

Prior to the establishment of the OAU Nkrumah had espoused such pan-African ideals as identity, liberty and importantly unity at the All-African Peoples Conference in 1958 (Nkrumah 1958). However, as will now be discussed, due to factionalism in the OAU not many of his ideals were incorporated into the final OAU charter. In fact, the final OAU charter was a compromise between three competing groups, which had different, often conflicting, ideas about how continental unity was to be achieved. The basis upon which the compromise was reached was rooted in the power struggles that were being played out between newly independent African countries that were not willing to cede their newly won independence and sovereignty (Wallerstein 1966: 774–775).

The first group, known as the Brazzaville Group, first met in Abidjan in 1960 and was comprised of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. This group was aligned with France over the issue of Algerian independence, was anti-communist in stance and ultimately believed that African unity should be sought via economic cooperation as opposed to political integration (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 21). The second grouping was the Casablanca group, which first met in 1961. This group was comprised of eight countries: the provisional Algerian government, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Mali and Morocco. This group supported the Algerian liberation movement and believed that political unity for Africa was a key prerequisite for economic cooperation. The Casablanca group thus sought political unity for Africa in the form of a federation-style government for the continent (Harshe 1988: 374).

The third grouping, the Monrovia group, first met in 1961 and consisted of the following 20 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African

Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), the Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gabon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo and Tunisia. It is important to note that this group had a significant overlap in membership with the Brazzaville group, as well as with the Casablanca group in the case of Libya. The Monrovia group found common support among its members for a number of principles, which subsequently became the 'Lagos Charter of the Organisation of African and Malagasy States' (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 22). The following five principles, espoused by the Monrovia group, also formed the basis of the charter of the OAU:

1. There should be absolute equality and sovereignty of African states.
2. Each African state should have the right to exist and not be annexed by another state.
3. Union of one state with another should only be voluntary in nature.
4. There should be a principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of African states.
5. No African state should harbour dissidents from another state. (Makinda & Okumu 2008: 22)

What was ultimately clear about the above principle was that they were centred on the institution of sovereignty and did not lend much weight to any notion of shared solidarity, let alone any conceptions of democracy or rule of law (Akokpari 2004: 224). Ultimately, these principles, a result of a compromise among the three groups, led to the OAU becoming more of a protectionist club for 'statist values' than an organisation genuinely striving for African unity.

The above discussion underscores the difficulty in pinning down one concrete definition of pan-Africanism. As noted, pan-Africanism has been explained in various ways. It has been defined, for example, in terms of the scope and nature of solidarity; the questions that have been posed by 'pan-Africanists' over the last three centuries, and in terms of what pan-Africanism as a 'movement' has tried to achieve. The historical account of the evolution of pan-Africanism and its temporally associated meaning provides the context for posing the question whether or not it provides the panacea for the 'northern problem'.

It must be noted that early pan-Africanists were mainly concerned with refuting the notion that the 'black-race' was inferior. This was an imperative inspired (as mentioned above) by the abolitionist movement at the time. This message could no doubt be extended ideologically to refute ideas about ethnic superiority. In other words, it is fair to say that ideologically, early pan-African notions would have been congruent with a notion of racial or continental solidarity that would encourage people to put national identity before ethnic grouping and thus value racial/national as opposed to ethnic solidarity. Moreover, even though this early notion was in some respects ideologically congruent

and pragmatic, solution for the 'northern problem' was not likely to be found in this extension.

As a more concrete notion of racial solidarity and consciousness became integral to pan-Africanism in the twentieth century, so too has the concept, while the movement provided an ideological framework that would seek to resolve the 'northern problem.' Indeed, if the ideals that were espoused by Nkrumah, for example, were to be widely adopted by Africans, the ethnic cleavages and identity struggles associated with the 'northern problem' would probably have, at least to some extent, been mitigated. The crafting of a common African identity, values and vision would have provided the glue to hold various African peoples together.

The above discussion though clearly shows that the meaning of pan-Africanism as writers like Nkrumah envisioned, at least in the institutionalised form of the OAU, has been lost. The Charter of the OAU, far from supporting unity, shared identity and racial consciousness and solidarity, favoured the protection of sovereign states whose boundaries were arbitrarily demarcated by colonialism. Thus, pragmatically, in its institutionalised form, pan-Africanism has done little to provide a cure for the 'northern problem.' If in its institutionalised form it has failed to rectify the northern problem, can regionalism provide an alternative answer? Before using SADC as a case study to address this question, we provide some conceptual analysis on regionalism in Africa.

REGIONALISM

Regional integration has a long history and many varying theoretical approaches. Regionalism and regional theory can be chronologically differentiated into old and new regionalism, which are further differentiated by their main goals. Old regionalism is identified by its commitment to economic relationships between states, while new regionalism incorporates both economic and political rationales for integration. Old regionalism dates back to the 1950s and state-driven efforts in Europe to coordinate economic policy with a goal to use economic relationships as a foundation to eventually achieve political goals and to ensure long-term peace. The specific definition of old regionalism is often debated and its specific beginning and ending are also ambiguous. It can most notably be traced to the work of writers and theorists such as Haas (1958) and Mittrany (1966).

The transformation of the international political economy with the end of the Cold War provides a useful transition point for the end of old regionalism and the beginning of what is now considered new regionalism (Marchand et al. 1999). The global restructuring of the world economy and increased inter-relatedness of the post-Cold War era provided a fertile ground for the

development of a new theory. Given the contemporary relevance of new regionalism, specifically in Africa, we use new regionalism and its various related theories as an approach for analysing and understanding the attempts at regionalism as a response to the 'northern problem' and the resulting success of the said endeavours.

Contemporary regional theory has three main approaches: market integration, regional cooperation, and development integration, which are discussed in some detail below. Additionally, new regionalism theory provides several frameworks for understanding regional initiatives in the contemporary globalised world: open regionalism, the WIDER approach, regionalism from below, and the external guarantors' model. Within the scholarship on new regionalism, there are several veins of thought about the new types of regionalism. A major distinction between old and new regionalism is based on formal and informal influences on the practice of regionalism. The new regionalism is distinguished by the increased importance of civil society, market forces, transnational networks, informal cross-border networks, and professional and business associations (Stephan et al. 2006: 271).

The term regionalism is highly debated and has little consensus amongst scholars (Lee 2003, Hurrell 2000). The definitions range from those involving economic relationships and the exchange of goods, to political relationships with state and non-state actors involved in cross-border relationships. The debate about the terms regionalism, regionalisation, and regional integration is not the main focus of this study, hence little attention will be given to the intricacies of the debate. Instead, the terms are briefly discussed and defined here for the purposes of this study.

Margaret Lee's definition of regionalism (and the one that is sufficiently comprehensive to be used in this study) is 'the adoption of a regional project by a formal regional economic organisation designed to enhance the political, economic, social, cultural, and security integration and/or cooperation of member states' (Lee 2003: 8). Regionalisation, on the other hand, is seen more as a process. Lee defines regionalisation as 'the process by which state and non-state actors seek to enhance their economic, political, cultural, social, and security interaction with societal forces within a region through formal or informal structures' (Lee 2003: 8–9). Regionalism, then, is a more formal effort, whereas regionalisation involves formal and informal structures, state and non-state actors. If informal structures such as drug dealers in one country establish and formalise links with similar formations in other countries within the region, a measure of regionalisation is said to be evolving.

Regional integration can be seen as both a process and as a result of the process of working to integrate (Asante 1997). Sam Asante suggests that there are two types of integration – negative and positive. Negative integration requires reducing or eliminating discrimination against participating members, while

positive integration refers to the 'formation and application of coordinated and common policies in order to fulfil economic and welfare objectives other than the mere removal of discrimination (Asante 1997: 19).

In order to understand the strategies for collaboration, and integration, a distinction must be made between regional cooperation, market integration and development integration. Regional integration differs from regional cooperation, but because of its diversity, the latter is much more difficult to categorise and analyse than other theoretical approaches to integration. Regional cooperation is argued as an essential first step for countries before integration can take place and refers to collaboration between countries with similar interests (Lee 2003). In other words, it refers to any form of cooperation between states that eventually translates into formal regional integration. Involving various processes such as a customs union, monetary union and sectoral integration, regional cooperation serves as the starting point of the regional integration process.

In addition, Haarlov defined the term as 'a process whereby nation states in common solve tasks and create improved conditions in order to maximise economic, political, social and cultural benefits for each participating country' (Haarlov 1997: 16). This form of cooperation allows countries to improve regional economic interaction, without the requirements of hasty liberalisation that could undermine growth and development. Regional cooperation can include: '(1) Execution of joint projects, technical sector cooperation, common running of services and policy harmonization; (2) Joint development of common natural resources; (3) Joint stand towards the rest of the world; and (4) Joint promotion of production (Haarlov 1997: 16)'.

Market integration is the process by which a region moves from a free trade area to an economic union. This integration involves a movement from a free trade area to total economic integration. A clear example of market integration exists in Viner's customs union theory. Customs unions, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) which was established in 1994, look specifically to economic relationships and are not as concerned with political integration or social cohesion. Viner's customs union theory involves the elimination of tariff barriers between member states and a common external party tariff (Viner 1950). Potential gains from market integration include increased production, increased output, integration with the world economy, and increased capital flows (Robson 1980).

However, to access these gains, several prerequisite conditions must be achieved, including similar development among member states, harmonised economic policies, regional macroeconomic stability, existing intra-regional trade, complementary development among member countries, and political stability among others (Robson 1980). These necessary conditions hardly exist in Africa. Most countries are at different levels of development and are likely

to receive different levels of benefit from participating in such an organisation, creating a situation where the more developed countries are poles of development and the less developed countries are poles of stagnation (Lee 2003). The likelihood of this result requires an alternative method for achieving regional integration and development in Africa.

Another approach to economic integration in Africa is the developmental integration model, or developmental regionalism. Development integration is based on similar principles to market integration, but has the goal of overcoming the problems created by market integration by developing productive capacity. The development integration model effectively links the goals of integration and development. Developmental integration is characterised by the objective of the process being economic and social development. Therefore, developmental regionalism or integration is a tool of collective improvement because the goal is to improve all of the partnering countries.

Developmental integration is founded on the critique of traditional integration strategies that are focused on efficiency maximisation because countries that have little industrialisation and low production capabilities will gain little from increased efficiency and market base resulting from regional integration (Stephan et al. 2006: 286). Developmental integration also uses as its foundation the political commitment of states, rather than allowing that commitment to come at a later stage as occurs with market integration and other forms of regional integration. This theory uses similar principles to market integration in that it sees market expansion as enabling countries to become internationally competitive, but it takes a developmental focus in order to address problems involved with openness. Development integration requires more state involvement than market integration, which also makes it a more appealing option for African countries (Haarlov 1997).

The theoretical approaches to integration in Africa provide a solid framework for scholars and policymakers to suggest solutions to Africa's developmental struggles. The potential benefits to integration are vast, but the hurdles also create real challenges to the accomplishment of these goals. In addition, the political and economic components to regional cooperation and integration must be considered and addressed alongside the social goals of addressing the 'northern problem'. However, there does not seem to be agreement on which approach is best to achieving regionalism and the pan-African identity in Africa.

What the AU and supporters of the pan-African movement want to achieve, rather, is deeper than regional integration or cooperation; the goal is to achieve some greater sense of 'regionness' in order to achieve pan-Africanism. Maclean (1999: 944) explains the concept of 'regionness' and its importance to uniting a geo-political region for a common purpose. Although the term region may be used to describe a subdivided geo-political space or an area with common

interests and understanding, regionness is the combination of these factors connected to a particular space.

Hettne (1993: 291) describes 'regionness' as 'a higher degree of economic interdependence, communication, cultural homogeneity, coherence, capacity to act and, in particular, capacity to resolve conflicts in the region concerned.' Southern Africa's regionness is arguably ambiguous with regard to these criteria. The sense of regional connection, or regionness, is important when discussing various development, economic, social, and security measures or goals because of the need to gain support from constituents within various regions. The AU, the major proponent of pan-Africanism, has promoted regional organisations throughout the continent as building blocks for the pan-African agenda, an issue we now turn to.

THE AFRICAN UNION AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECS)

The African Union was inaugurated in 2002 upon the dissolution of the 39-year-old Organisation for African Unity (OAU). According to Magliveras and Naldi (2002: 416), the AU was founded 'on the political, social, and economic integration of the Continent' and 'on the principles of democracy, popular participation, good governance and protection of human rights'. In addition to these foundational principles, there are three additional objectives for the AU – the uniting of sub-regional institutions to pursue continent-wide cooperation, developing the conditions for African countries to build social, economic, and political relationships that will minimise the possibility of conflict between them, and provide an institutional framework for the continent to compete economically with the rest of the world (Tieku 2004). The vision of the AU is that of 'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena (www.au.int – Accessed: 15 June 2011). Whereas the OAU was focused on leading and supporting liberation struggles, the AU seeks to encourage Africa's integration and development.

In order to achieve its goal of a united Africa, the AU has recently sought to achieve its goals through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in strategic areas throughout the continent. RECs are identified in the Abuja Treaty 'as the building blocks towards an African Economic Community' (SARUA 2009: 24). The Protocol on the Relations between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities defines regional economic communities as 'a regional grouping of African states organized into a legal entity by treaty, with economic and social integration as its main objective' (African Union 2007). The AU has partnered with several sub-regional organisations throughout the continent, including the SADC, in order to better achieve its goals.

The additional sub-regional groupings that the AU has partnered with are the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), and the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA). The AU, then, has become a coordinating body for the sub-regional efforts throughout the continent. The Preamble of the 2007 Protocol on Relations between the AU and the Regional Economic Communities highlights the need to accelerate the integration processes in the continent with an overall goal of establishing a common market in Africa and an African Economic Community (African Union 2007). The objectives of the Protocol show the desire to consolidate and harmonise individual policies and cooperate in a more effective way to achieve integration.

The sub-regional groupings are intended to be utilised as tools by the AU to achieve its goals on the continent. The ultimate goal is an economic union of the many members, but goals also include social and political integration. These goals are not without challenges. The Protocol specifically highlights that 'the main obstacles to the full implementation of the policies, measures and programmes of the RECs include resource constraints '[...] to plan, manage, implement, follow-up and monitor the implementation of agreed decisions policies measures, programmes and activities' (African Union 2007). Again, these building blocks seem to be a good idea, but are riddled with challenges to achieving the vision of its planners. The AU now relies on regional efforts for the success of its great pan-African objectives. Although the notion of a pan-African identity is laudable, however, achieving it is questionable because of the litany of challenges facing the AU.

REGIONALISM AS A RESPONSE TO THE 'NORTHERN PROBLEM'

In analysing the relevance of regionalism in addressing the northern problem, we focus on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as a case study. SADC developed from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was established in Lusaka, Zambia in April 1980. On 17 August 1992, the SADC Treaty and Declaration transformed the SADCC into what is known today as the SADC, shifting from a coordination conference to a development community. This shift was necessitated by developments in the region, notable among which was the eminent demise of apartheid in South Africa. SADC now has 15 member states: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

SADC's broader vision

[I]s that of a common future, a future within a regional community that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice and peace and security for the people of Southern Africa. This shared vision is anchored on the common values and principles and the historical and cultural affinities that exist between the people of Southern Africa (www.sadc.int – Accessed: 15 June 2011).

This vision reveals the commitment to fostering a community within the region. SADC's mission is 'to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance, and durable peace and security, so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy' (www.sadc.int – Accessed: 15 June 2011). This mission reveals SADC's desire to encourage growth and development through increased cooperation and integration, which requires further harmonisation of individual Member States' policies in accordance with regional goals.

Other SADC objectives range from equitable economic growth to the promotion of common political values through democratic institutions to combating HIV/AIDS, to the eradication of poverty (www.sadc.int – Accessed: 15 June 2011). In order to achieve these objectives, the SADC Treaty provides that SADC shall 'harmonise political and socio-economic policies and plans of Member States' and 'develop policies aimed at the progressive elimination of obstacles to the free movement of capital and labour, goods and services, and of the people of the Region generally, among Member States' (www.sadc.int – Accessed: 15 June 2011). The SADC treaty identifies the elimination of obstacles to free movement of capital and labour as important to achieving the objectives of the SADC. It is important to note that 'migrations are not an isolated phenomenon: movements of commodities and capital almost always give rise to movements of people' (Castles & Miller 2009: 4). Essentially, the increase in cooperation, trade, and goals of SADC inherently work to influence the movement of people within the region, as well.

The movement of people within a sub-regional organisation such as SADC highlights many of the problems associated with ethnic divisions that are exacerbated by the postcolonial borders in Africa. Southern Africa has a long history of labour migration and mixing of cultures. International borders within the region have always been porous and poorly policed. In fact, before the 1960s borders between many states in Southern Africa did not exist (Williams 2006). In an effort to allow for increased labour mobility, a regional identity and facilitate the regional integration process, a Draft Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons (henceforth Free Movement Protocol) was developed by the SADC

Secretariat in the mid-1990s (SADC 1995), mostly by the Secretary General, Dr Kaire Mbuende and SADC Chief Economist Dr Charles Hove (Oucho & Crush 2001). At that time, the framers of the free movement protocol believed that the integration supported by the SADC treaty required intense cooperation that necessitated the free movement of all factors of production across borders, including capital, labour, and services (Mokone 1997: 7).

The free movement protocol was to be implemented in four phases: first, through the establishment of a visa-free entry of citizens of SADC countries to other member states for visits less than six months; second, the rights of residence extended to all SADC citizens; third, the right for individuals to establish themselves within any SADC country, including the right to work, and finally the goal of eliminating all internal borders between SADC member states (Solomon 1997). In addition, the free movement protocol distinguished between SADC and non-SADC citizens to differentiate intra-SADC and external movement to the region (Oucho & Crush 2001). This differentiation would be useful to regulate the movement of extra-SADC citizens. If passed, this protocol would have contributed to a regional identity and potentially decrease the tension caused by nationalistic identities.

However, the protocol never passed. The concerns which led to the demise of the protocol were primarily from South Africa which feared the implications for its passing. The government's position was based largely on a report conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 1995. Among South Africa's concerns was the overburdening of social services as well as the threat to South African citizens' jobs posed by an influx of immigrants. South Africa believed that the free movement protocol would increase the number of people seeking work in South Africa and that this would threaten jobs of citizens.

In addition, the HSRC posited that the elimination of restrictions would legitimise the presence of undocumented migrants in the country and that these people would have to be absorbed by South Africa. According to Oucho and Crush (2001), the HSRC grossly overestimated figures to suggest a much more serious problem than existed in reality. The HSRC's analysis also assumed that all migrants to the country were immigrants who sought to establish themselves permanently in South Africa rather than migrants in the country on a temporary basis (HSRC 1995). The readiness of the South African government to accept the HSRC analysis reveals the obvious reluctance to establish a regional identity and freedom of movement in southern Africa.

The case of the free movement issue within SADC not only reveals some of the hurdles to achieving regional integration, but more importantly to the point, reveals the ways that the 'northern problem' can be further exacerbated by regional initiatives. South Africa's objection clearly shows the desire to advance a national identity and interest at the risk of regional interests as well as minority domestic interests. Additionally, the 2008 cases of xenophobic

violence, among others, in South Africa reveal the extent to which regional migration patterns conflict with national conceptions of identity.

Instead of creating a regional identity to counter the domestic ethnic divisions in various member states, regional efforts to facilitate the free movements of people have rather reinforced borders and exacerbated ethnic divisions. Despite the fact that southern Africa has a history of regional migration patterns, the borders imposed in the region continue to create ethnic divisions and hostility among the new states – in fact, perpetuating the northern problem.

Another illuminating case is the manner in which SADC has dealt with the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe. The challenges and political history of Zimbabwe are beyond the scope of this chapter. However, as the political and economic crisis in the country deepened former president Thabo Mbeki of South Africa was appointed by SADC to help resolve the problem. Mbeki adopted quiet diplomacy, which was more or less supported by SADC, as the approach to addressing the National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Quiet diplomacy, however, was not quite successful in resolving the problem in Zimbabwe (Akopari & Nyoni 2009).

In September 2008, a unity government was formed between President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF, Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC and another smaller MDC faction led by Arthur Mutambara. SADC was to ensure the success of the unity government. However, again, SADC failed to ensure the implementation of the terms of the agreement. Although Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act calls for regional and continental intervention in countries where war crimes, genocide and/or crime against humanities occur, none of these charges have been contemplated, let alone discussed, at any AU meeting. The inaction of both SADC and the AU have left Mugabe, whose party was only second to the MDC in the 2008 elections, firmly in control as president and Zimbabwe deeply polarised along party lines. The AU and SADC failures in Zimbabwe not only revealed the weakness of these bodies to carry through major regional projects especially those related to promoting democracy and human rights, but also emboldens errant states in the future to disregard the authority of the regional body.

CONCLUSION

The northern problem and its associated challenges, dramatised in political rivalries among ethnic groups, disaffection of constituencies and threats of secession, among other things, was caused largely by the arbitrary borders imposed on Africa by Europe. Pan-Africanism and regional integration have been the key instruments used to address the northern problem. We noted that alongside pan-Africanism and regionalism, there were suggestions in the mid-1990s to bring Africa under trusteeship, a more benign form of colonialism.

However, this re-colonisation idea has since been muted. Similarly, there were suggestions for re-drawing Africa's borders. However, like the re-colonisation idea, the reconfiguration proposal has generated scepticism as a result of the many questions it raised and has not been seen as a credible alternative.

Pan-Africanism and regionalism have remained the leading continental approaches to the northern problem. Although it has a long history, the first pan-Africanist project on the African continent found expression in the formation of the OAU in 1963. The OAU, however, failed to solve the northern problem essentially because of its failure to adopt the 'United States of Africa' project proposed by Nkrumah and the Casablanca group and, consequently, its preoccupation with the accelerated decolonisation of the continent. Social and economic programmes, which were directly relevant to the mitigation of the northern problem never featured on the organisation's agenda. The incapacities and the general limitations of the OAU in crafting unity among member states and resolving intra-state conflicts precipitated its demise. The OAU was subsequently displaced and replaced by the AU in July 2002.

The AU's approach to addressing the northern question was through regional integration. As noted, there are various approaches to regional integration. However, regional integration schemes in Africa have largely focused on economic (market) integration, with little, if any, efforts at stimulating social cohesion. While the Constitutive Act of the AU listed solidarity and cohesion among African peoples as a vision of the continental body (AU 2002), this was expected to be a by-product of economic and political integration rather than an autonomous project to be pursued. Neither have sub-regional organisations been proactive in engineering effective cohesion among peoples. Article 7 of the ECOWAS protocol, for example, tasked the Authority of Heads of States and Governments, to promote the harmonisation of social and cultural policies of its member states. However, this requirement which would have served as an entry point for engineering social cohesion, has only remained on paper. The overriding objective of ECOWAS has remained economic and political integration. The failure of the economic integration scheme to spawn social integration was amply demonstrated, for example, by the reluctance, even resistance, of South Africa to ratify the SADC protocol on free movement of persons.

This, along with the prevalence of xenophobia suggests that regional integration in Southern Africa has done little to alleviate the northern problem. This is not, however, to diminish the relevance of pan-Africanism and regionalism in contemporary African politics. We suggest rather that addressing the northern problem requires the AU and its sub-regional bodies to expand the current integration project beyond economics and the creation of common markets. Integration both at the continental and sub-regional levels should proactively target social cohesion. That way, Africa would have a better chance of effectively resolving the seemingly intractable northern problem.

Pan-Africanism and African regional economic integration

Michael. O. Bonchuk

INTRODUCTION

The delineation of most of Africa's international boundaries took place in the nineteenth century. The twentieth century provided an appropriate opportunity to reflect on the predominantly conflictual-laden African boundary regimes and suggest the alternative future of the boundaries as stimulants not of conflicts and wars, but of international cooperation and regional integration. The chapter is a critical reflection on the wide range of boundary potentials begging for policy exploration and application. It is argued that the adoption of 'uti possidetis' principle of boundary maintenance by African leaders in 1963 Cairo Summit of Heads of States and Government froze African boundaries which created a 'fortress mentality', thereby negating the pan-African ideal of African unity.

This reflection is undertaken in the context of a systematic comparison with European contemporary history and the lessons of experience with special reference to the factor of trans-boundary regionalism based on the evolution of the European Union (EU), and Europe of the regions 'Euregios,' in contradistinction to Europe of the nation-state. Regional economic integration predicated on African regions 'Afregios,' as a strand of the pan-African perspective is presented as a major way out of the deep and worsening economic crisis bedevilling African economies. By emphasising trans-boundary regionalism focused on historical linkages along and astride African borders, the boundary conflicts could be considerably reduced and the border regions converted to frontiers of opportunities.

We reject the desperate attempts to fossilize Africa into the wounds inflicted upon it by the vultures of colonialism. Consequently, African leaders must address the problems of colonial boundaries through mutual understanding on fundamental issues. It is no use smoothening this problem with the verbiage of 'Uti possidetis' since it will always come back to haunt the continent as it has done in the past (Nsogura 1, 2003:3).

Frontiers (i.e. borderlands) are indeed the razor edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, of life and death for nations (Lord Curzon 1902: 23).

Regional integration is widely acknowledged as a major way out of the deep and worsening political and economic crisis confronting postcolonial Africa. This explains why African countries have consistently pursued policies of regional cooperation and integration as a means of promoting socio-economic development and reduction of their dependence on the West.

With regional cooperation and integration is the prospect of ensuring long-term sustainable socio-economic growth and development. This would enhance the reduction, if not total eradication of border conflicts between many an adjacent state through a systematic promotion of transfrontier regionalism; focused on international cooperation.

From 1960, many institutions for regional cooperation and integration were created and re-created at the levels of the entire continent and its constituent sub-regions. However, not much premium has been placed on the revision of the principle of 'Uti possedetis' adopted by African Heads of States and Government after independence.

The primary aim of this chapter is to trace and analyse the principle of 'Uti Possedetis' as this applies to the African problematique. It is argued that the principle of 'Uti possedetis' or boundary maintenance, runs counter to the aspirations of regional economic cooperation and integration either at the continental or sub-regional levels. The exclusivist nature of these boundaries negates the concept of the African Economic Treaty of 1991, the AU and other sub-regional groupings.

It is suggested that this principle be revised and the boundary regions converted from their conflictual barrier functions to bridges of cooperation and poles of integration. These 'Afregios' should be analysed and made to function as their counterpart 'Euregios' in the EU, and the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) where regional cooperation and integration projects are vigorously pursued and activity supported by the academic and research communities.

The chapter highlights the similarities between European and African boundaries, the experience of 'transfrontier regionalism' in Western, Central and Eastern Europe as imaginative policy options for Africa, if the continent has to move away from the morass of border conflicts that often negate the momentum of economic cooperation and integration on the continent. By way of policy recommendations, the chapter concludes that in order to sustain the modest developments and ensure their acceleration and spread there must be a radical reorientation of the mind set of postcolonial Africa's so called 'inheritance elite.'

THE PRINCIPLE OF 'UTI POSSEDETIS JURIS'

The term 'Uti Possedetis' is derived from Roman law, in which it is designated an interdict of the praetor, by which the disturbance of the existing state of possession of immovable, as between two individuals, was forbidden. In international law, its meaning is more fully expressed in 'Uti Possedetis Ita Possedeatis,' or as you possess, so may you possess' (Bogss 1940: 79).

The literature relating to boundaries of the American Republics from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn contain frequent references to the principle of 'Uti Possedetis.' As applied to Latin American boundaries, it signified in regard to new republics carved from Spanish domains (also Brazil) that the independent country was the successor of the Vice Royalty, Captaincy-General or other entity of the same territorial limits of the colonial entity and essentially at the date when independence was claimed. In some instances, a distinction has been made between 'Uti Possedetis Juris' – meaning essentially 'as you have a legal right to possess' according to documents antedating independence, and 'Uti Possedetis de facto', signifying 'as you actually possess' (Boggs 1940: 84).

The principle of 'Uti Possedetis' came to possess significance in regard to Latin American boundaries, which was necessarily truly great, and in many instances preponderant. During the colonial era, the Spanish crown created new Vice Royalities, audiencias, and their jurisdictions; some were large, others small. In some instances, they abolished two or more and at times combined two or more such administrative units. This made the map of Latin American to become a sort of 'Palimpsest' from which the earlier inscriptions of colonial domain were supposedly erased in order that new writing might supersede them (Pounds 1972: 66).

These inconsistencies and ambiguities incident to long series of acts of the crown did not cause great confusion, because the power of a Viceroy or Captain-General was currently subject to references to the reigning sovereign. The independent nations however, reading back into the colonial record of royal decrees of various kinds, sought the record of the past, which seemed best to support claims to desired territory.

In very sparsely occupied territory, there was sometimes no effective possession, and claims based on the texts of documents sometimes widely conflicting, were the only possible claims. In the absence of effective occupation and administration, 'Uti possedetis' could only mean in effect 'you have a right to possess according to the recorded acts of the sovereign and the known fact relating to jurisdiction of his agents'.

Consequently, in administering the territorial possessions under its jurisdiction, the application of the principles of 'Uti possedetis', was much more complicated than anticipated. The term appears in many treaties and arbitral awards, but its use seldom, if ever, removes ambiguity. If there has been no

debate regarding the place where the boundary rightly belongs, there would have been no occasion to employ the term 'Uti possedetis.' But the use of the term implied only an abstract principle and did not dispose of the problem of territorial delimitation to which it was meant to be applied.

THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY AND 'UTI POSSEDETIS'

The Berlin West African conference of 15 November 1884 through February 1885 marked the inception of the modern state system for Africa, based on the model of the European nation-state with a demand for precise and characteristically, or 'artificial' and often 'arbitrary territorial' framework. The founding fathers of the OAU were quite aware of the problems of peace, stability and development posed by the territorial structures and boundaries of the states they had inherited from the erstwhile colonial authorities who created the states. By Article III paragraph III of the OAU charter of 1963, the member states solemnly affirmed and declared their adherence to the principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state.

The issues of boundaries and boundary disputes constituted the special subject of the Resolution of the Assembly of Head of States and Government in its very ordinary session in Cairo in July 1964. In a manner that de facto brought Africa in line with the 'Uti possedetis juris' of Latin American States, the Cairo submit 'solemnly affirmed the strict respect of all member states of the organization for the principles laid down in paragraph 3 of Article III of the charter of the organization.' The Assembly of Head of States and Government at the Cairo submit in 1964 'solemnly declared that all member states pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence. These borders have become at times "iron curtains, bamboo, electrical or some other materials." They have been sources or irritants of conflicts, wars, especially where two mutually exclusive principles are at stake, namely; historic rights with its attendant territorial revisionism versus territorial integrity'.

As A. Gromyko has observed, 'Africa's boundaries have a father whose name is colonialism' (Barakindo 1984: 30). Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was strongly in favour of the 'Uti possedetis juris' principle of boundary maintenance. Speaking in the House of Representatives on Nigeria's relations with the outside world on 20 August, 1960, he declared inter alia:

On the problems of boundaries, our view is that although in the past some of these were created artificially by European powers, which even went so far as to split some communities into three parts, each administered by a different colonial power, nevertheless, these boundaries should be respected and, in the

interest of peace must remain the recognized boundaries until such a time as the people concerned decide on their own free will to merge into one unit. We shall discourage any attempt to influence such communities by force or through undue pressure to change, since such interference could only result in unrest and harm to the overall plan for the future of the great continent (Boyd 1979:50).

Further, at the May 1963 Submit Conference of Independent African States which took place at Addis Ababa, Blew submitted that:

[I]t was unfortunate that the African states have been broken into different groups by the colonial powers. In some cases a single tribe broken up into four different states. You might find a section in Guinea, a section in Mali, a section in Sierra Leone and perhaps a section in Liberia. That was not out fault because, for over 60 years, these different units have been existing and any attempt on the part of any African country to disregard this fact might bring trouble to this continent. This is the thing we want to avoid and for this reason, Nigeria recognizes all existing boundaries in Africa. This I think, Sir is the bases of unity, which we in Nigeria pray for our continent (Bukarambe 1983: 45).

The Ethiopian Prime Minister noted that 'it is in the interest of all Africans now to respect the frontiers (borders) drawn on the maps, whether they were good or bad by the former colonial powers'. The Malian President warned that redrawing the boundaries would mean introducing back imperialism in Africa, while the Madagascar President noted that it was no longer possible, or desirable to modify the boundaries (Bukaramba 1983).

In 1945, the Manchester pan-African Congress had concluded that: The artificial division and territorial boundaries created by the imperialist powers are deliberate steps to obscure the political unity of the African people.

At the Accra All-African People Conference in 1950, the nationalists denounced the artificial boundaries drawn by the imperialists which they claimed were designed to divide the peoples of Africa particularly those which cut across ethnic groups and divided peoples of the same stock. Thus, the issue of African boundaries divided African leaders while the radicals led by Dr Kwame Nkrumah wanted closer unity, the conservatives led by A. Abubakar wanted to consolidate their independence within the territorial framework acquired from the colonial masters.

The adoption of the 'Uti Possedetis Juris' doctrine of Latin America with its inconsistencies and ambiguities froze African boundaries and provided them with a legal framework for boundary maintenance.

A. Strassaldo has explained these ambiguities and inconsistencies in terms of the fact that:

Borders divide and unite, bind the interior and link the interior; they are barriers and junctions, walls and doors, organs of defence and attack. Frontier areas (boundaries) can be managed to maximize either of such functions. They can be maintained as bulwarks against neighbours or made into areas of peaceful exchange (Strassaldo 1889: 339).

In his famous Oxford Lecture in 1902, Lord Curzon stated that:

Frontiers (i.e. boundaries) are indeed the razor edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, of life or death for nations.

The binary view of borders was further articulated by Star and Most in their seminal joint study of the border phenomenon in international relations. They stated that 'shared borders are like coins with one side issuing with 'risk' and the other with 'opportunities' in international interaction' (Star & Most 1976:40). In the view of F. Gross, interaction in intentional relations between adjacent states is a continuum with conflicts at one end and cooperation at the other (Gross 1973:44).

The continuum can be stimulated in either direction depending on the extent to which the border in question is 'open' or 'closed'. These ambiguities and inconsistencies are suggestive of the fact that policy options are limited to either conflict or cooperation, in the words of Lord Curzon 'war or peace [...] death or life.' W. Zartman has suggested that:

Any African country can have boundary problems if it wants. The newness of African States and the frequent irrelevance of their geographical frames to their economic, social and political lives make that continent more potentially susceptible to territorial disputes than any other... (Zartman 1965:156).

The history of African boundaries reveals that interstate relations are occasioned by wars and conflicts. Though it is not the intention here to give a catalogue of border conflicts on the continent, it is pertinent to note the causes of these conflicts vary as widely as the specific cases themselves. The number of border wars and threats of war is simply legion. With particular reference to the continental dimension in focus, a great deal of the occurrences have involved the problem of the generally indeterminate character of the borders and rival national interest in transborder economic resources. Whatever the causes, the border wars and threats of wars have continued to compromise peace and security and proved completely detrimental to the cause of regional cooperation, integration and orderly economic planning and development of the continent, including its constituent sub-region.

TRANSFRONTIER REGIONALISM AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

'Transfrontier regionalism' is a reference to a novel category or internationalism forced on territorial adjacent sovereign states. Such states are compelled to interact for reasons not only of common interest in human and natural resources straddled by a shared international boundary, but also common concerns about the cross border environmental impacts of human activities and natural disasters in spite of 'Uti Possedetis Juris' or boundary maintenance (Asiwaju 1999:1–14).

The topicality of regional integration boosted by the spectacular success story of the E U including the effective conversion of boundaries between member states from historic roles as barriers into new functions as bridges, has influenced the phenomenal expansion of both theoretical and empirical studies in various fields particularly border studies and have collaborated to widen and deepen the understanding of 'regional cooperation and integration' as a revisionist perspective on borders as opposed to the principle of 'Uti possedetis Juris'.

In Europe, tranfrontier regionalism began as uncoordinated informal initiatives across several of the international boundaries in Western Europe. The organisation of 'European Regions' or 'Euregios' evolved and became the new coordination power of European economic integration.

From their initial status as informal organisations, 'Euregios' now operate everywhere in the region as forma institutions recognised by international laws. The success recorded by the practice of transborder regionalism and its contributions has attracted policy makers and scholars outside Western Europe. In Northern Europe, (especially the Scandinavian Countries), including Central and Eastern Europe, the post-1945 development in Eastern Europe has been adopted as a strategy for transboundary cooperation and integration (Asiwaju 1996: 70).

In Eastern Europe and since the demolition of the 'Berlin Wall' and the effects suffered by communist regimes, this 'new thinking' has become attractive in transboundary cooperation and integration. Also, in North America, this paradigm is being canvassed and adopted in transboundary cooperation, integration and management of shared natural resources.

However, this new thinking is yet to be seriously considered and accepted by African leaders as they still hold tenaciously to the obsolete concept of national sovereignty and 'Uti possedetis'. Much like in Europe, the prospects for transborder regionalism in Africa exist and are irresistibly driven by some interlocking variables. These include the divided but related groups on both sides of their common borders, border economy and trade, availability of natural resources in some areas of their common borders; and the environment including the widely recognised necessity to ground African regionalism and sub-regional integration on the realities of local African history.

In Europe, transfrontier regionalism is known to have started and developed as a companion movement to the evolution of European integration. The aim of transfrontier regionalism is the achievement of transborder micro-integration that would dovetail into European macro-integration. Originally, a promotion of the Council of Europe (founded in 1949), transfrontier regionalism was exceptionally boosted in the 1980s by the adoption of regional approach to planning and development by the better resourced European Community, now European Union; and the systematic promotion of the concepts of a new 'Europe of the regions' in contradistinction to that of the old Europe of the nation-state with attendant boundary problems. In the rather instructive words of Giuseppe Vedovato, an Italian expert:

The starting point for the development of transfrontier regions can be situated in the 2nd world war, when the insurmountable political and ideological problems of reconstruction made it necessary to look to new openings and new territorial cooperation models. It was a time that saw the almost spontaneous establishment of contacts between local communities that were to render frontiers more 'permeable and give rise to a variety of different organizational forms (Vedovato 1995:2).

Since 1986 when the European single Act was initiated to anticipate the primacy of regions as choice points for planning and development in the community of Europe, 'Euregios' and associated transfrontier cooperative initiatives had become permanent features of European life with special reference to member states of the Council of Europe and the European Community. The European Charter on Fronteir and Transfronteir Regions, adopted by the Association of European border regions with headquarters in Bonn, contains a list of 46 regions and associations located all over Western and Northern Europe concentrated on the Rhine (Asiwaju, 1996:71).

Among typical examples of organised 'Euregios' are the 'Regio Bassillians' created in 1963 around the Swiss-French-German Borders, with Basel as the nucleus. There is the Rhine-Waal-Euregio launched in 1970 to promote German Dutch cooperation along the binominal boundary. The 'Age AIP Adria' and the Cotrao' – regional respectively, connect Italy with particular alpine countries, including former communist Yugoslavia (Aldotevi & Asiwaju 1985).

In Northern Europe, the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) have developed series of bilateral and multilateral agreements to curb activities that could lead to the pollution of the air, soil, fresh water and the sea. Regions most advanced in transfrontier regionalism, promotion include the 'North Calothe Areas', the West Nordic Region 'Archipalago,' 'Arko' 'Ostfold Bohus' Orsund Canal and the 'Bornolm Southeastern skane' (Hansen 1983: 330).

Since 1970, transfrontier regionalism has gained tremendous lobbying power and political influence. Thus, we have strategic institutions as border development agencies, which have won recognition and support for transfrontier regionalism at continental, regional and national levels. For example, the Associations of European Border Regions based in Bonn, that function at the continental level and the creation of liaison office of the European Regional Organisation located in Strasbourg.

Among these are the adoption of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Authorities and Communities by the Council of Europe in 1980 and 1983 respectively. The creation within the council secretariat of a specialised office for local and Regional Authorities in 1984, and the institutionalisation of the conference of ministers responsible for Regional Planning. These provided part of the wider array of evidence of the tremendous influence which transborder regionalism came to wield on the European Economic Community and the Economic Commission in Brussels, the coming into effect of the single European Act and enthroning of regions as the primary planning units in border regions as bridges rather than barriers.

With widespread collapse of communist regimes in the early 1990s and the subsequent establishment of democratic political and economic pluralism in Central and Eastern Europe, events that have raised the unabating prospects for the ultimate admission of former communist Europe into the EU, transfrontier regionalism has spread its tentacles into Central and Eastern Europe.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN BOUNDARIES

A.I. Asiwaju has persuasively and consistently argued that states territories and boundaries in postcolonial Africa are structurally and functionally not very different from those found elsewhere, of the nation-state created in consequence of preceding centuries of imperialist expansion and colonial domination by erstwhile metropolitan powers, now core member states of the Council of Europe and the European Union (Asiwaju 1996: 80). Though there are important differences in the details of history and geography, significant similarities exist between Africa and Europe with special regard to local people's perception of the arbitrariness of the processes and overall artificiality of the partition effects. Comparative studies of the localised impacts of the boundaries in Europe and Africa point more to similarities and therefore obfuscate a clearer vision of the vital lesson, which Africa can learn from European experience.

For example, it is often lamented that Africa was badly 'Partitioned'; that African boundaries are artificial and often arbitrarily drawn with little or no regard for pre-existing socio-economic patterns and networks on the ground; that the boundaries have split unified cultural areas and mindlessly fragmented

coherent natural planning regions and ecosystems; that a great deal of Africa's contemporary economic problems have stemmed from territorial division into such a large number of competitive rather than complimentary national economies; and finally, that much of the continent's current political problems have originated from the arbitrary nature of the colonial boundaries which (among other things) results in 'artificially juxtaposing incompatible antagonistic groups' (Asiwaju 1984: 30).

However, comparative border studies have revealed that one of these assertions about Africa has been sustained by findings of focused comparisons with Europe. Rather, comparative assessments, based on detailed case studies, have demonstrated a replication of the quintessence of European existence in Africa. In Europe, as in Africa, neighbouring border regions represent areas of opposing systems. Disharmonious legal regimes and parallel administrative tradition and superimposed upon invariably distinct local indigenous cultures straddled by the intersovereignty boundaries (Sahlin 1989: 43).

Thus, close similarities have been found in respect to the Catalans, 'an ethnic group neither French nor Spanish in the Cerdanya Valley of the Eastern Pyreness, split into two by the Franco-Spanish border on the continent. In the other, the Somalis have been vivisected in the Horn of Africa in the Ogaden region. The Alur have been split between Uganda and Kenya; the Chewa and Ngoni astride Zambian boundaries with Malawi and Mozambique; the Bakgatla Ba ga Kgafela of Botswana and the Transvaal; the Yoruba and Hausa, ethnic groups split into officially different words of the French and the British by the present day Nigeria-Benin and Nigeria-Niger, the Boki, Ejagham, Akwaya and Tiv, split by the Anglo-German Boundary of 1913 into Nigeria and Cameroun respectively, and so on (Asiwaju 1984; Bonchuk 1999:730).

These groups, either in Europe or Africa, are but a few of the more numerous vivisected ethnic groups or 'transborder peoples' found across virtually all state frontiers on the two continents. Either in Europe or Africa, the process of partitioning was more or less the same. It has been estimated, for example that more than 60 per cent of (Europe's present borders were drawn during the twentieth century and that 'no less than 700 miles of new political lines' have been drawn to frame present day Central and Eastern European countries as a result of the crisis that have come over Europe, sequel to the collapse of communist regimes in the late 1980s and early 1990s and the resultant dissolution of existing states and the erection of new ones.

In Europe and Africa, state territories and boundaries have been found to share similar characteristics of essential arbitrariness of their creation and their locally felt artificiality and have resulted from the modern state formation processes in the ludicrous shapes and sizes of the states' territories and the comparable incidents of such inherent dependent entities as land-locked states and enclaves (Asiwaju 1996: 251).

There have also been similar experiences with artificially partitioned natural regions-seas, lakes, rivers, mountains, valleys, forests, deserts, etc., and more gravely, coherent ethnic groups and culture areas. The effects of later sub-categories has proved to be the extreme productivity of ethnic nationalities or minorities and the associated questions of irredentism and the more frightful practice of 'ethnic cleansing.' Both in Europe and Africa, state frontier are notorious for their roles as irritants of disputes and conflicts within and more especially between states.

These and other similarities of structure and problems of state territories and boundaries in Europe and Africa are not surprising since the boundaries on one continent have remained more or less as created by an imperialist from another continent, who drew and managed them on the model of the borders in their own respective countries. In Europe and Africa, the boundary making processes as well as the structures and functions of the resultant states frontiers are more similar than dissimilar. These also go for the type of legal instruments and political engineering that have been designed for their management – the same kind of 'protocols' and 'exchange of notes, treaties' the same pattern of diplomacy. These essential similarities behave that the lesson of one continent cannot be wished by the other.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

A survey of all the developing regions of the world reveals that Africa is by far the poorest and least developed and most heterogeneous. Of the 50 African countries, 32 have fewer than 8 million inhabitants and 34 are in the low income category with an average GNP per capita of US \$355 (UNDP/World Bank Report, 1989). According to a World Bank Report, Intra-Regional Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa, overall intra-African trade has remained around 4 per cent of total trade during the 1970s, significantly below the level of the early 1970s (Gatt 1987: 222).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s records reveal that total external debt of Sub-Saharan African countries at the end of 1988 amounted to US \$142 billion, representing about 11 per cent of the total external debt of developing countries at that time (OECD, 1989). This means that Africa was not only the poorest developing region, but the most foreign-trade dependent economy and the most dependent on the market of the developing countries. It was also the slowest growing in terms of mutual interdependence.

The appalling economic situation convinced African scholars (whether Panafricanist, Gradualist or functionalist, and Policy makers) that regionalism and integration or collective self-reliance was the most appropriate strategy to

achieve autonomous, self-reliant and self-sustained development. While many institutions for regional cooperation and integration that were created soon after independence have progressed, integration has been disappointing.

Thus, the February 1979 OAU Monrovia symposium on the future of development prospects in Africa called for the creation of an African Common Market based on progressive coordination and integration, which would evolve in the form of concentric circles reflecting the economic areas that currently exist on the continent. Similarly, the 1980 OAU Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and Final Act of Lagos (FAL) proposed the eventual establishment of an African Common Market (ACM) as a first step towards the creation of an African Economic Community (AEC) by the year 2000.

Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986 – 1990 (APPER) adopted on 20 July 1985 by the twenty-first OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government acknowledged that 'Economic Integration through regional and continental cooperation is today a top priority which will enable the economies of the African countries to be viable within a system of international relations characterized by inequality in the balance of power' (OAU, 1995; 101). Similarly, the United Nations programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) adopted at the UN General Assembly's Special Session on Africa on 1 June 1988, stated that 'the International Community reaffirms its belief in the strategy for collective self-reliance among developing countries and reiterates its conviction that economic and technical cooperation among these countries should constitute a key element in the economic recovery of Africa and to the mutual benefit of developing countries' (UN, 1986).

The Lagos Plan of Action's proposed African Economic Community aimed 'to promote collective, accelerated, self-reliant and self-sustaining states and their integration in the economic, social, cultural fields (OAU, 1981:6; OAU, 1980:128). This goal was to be achieved in two stages. During the first stage (decades of the 1980s), the objective was to strengthen the existing regional economic communities and to establish economic groupings in the other regions of Africa, so as to cover the continent as a whole – north with central, eastern and southern Africa, to effectively strengthen sectoral integration at the continental levels; and to promote coordination and harmonisation among the existing and future economic groupings for the gradual establishment for an African Common Market.

During the second stage (decades of the 1990s), sectoral integration was to be strengthened. Measures towards the progressive establishment of a common market and an African Economic Community were to be taken. In this context, the following sub-regional organisations were successively created: the member states of ECOWAS, Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa, PYA Lusaka, in December, 1987; the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) Libreville, 18 October 1989.

Since regional integration implies cooperation among states in geographically proximate and delimited areas to foster economic, political, cultural and security interest, the African region has natural choice points for integration regimes. These cannot be achieved until the 'Uti Possedetis Juris' principle, which promotes the barrier function of boundaries, is revised to allow these boundaries as bridges rather than barriers.

Depending on the policy put in place by the one or the other vis-à-vis its geographically contiguous neighbours, the integrational interactions generated by such transboundary human and natural resources may be one of conflict and war or cooperation and peace. The choice is between the perception of the shared boundary either as barrier and impenetrability or as a bridge and permeability. The notion of boundaries and borders as bridges rather than barriers constitutes the very heart of the theory and practice of transfrontier regionalism as the hand-maid of regional integration as evidenced in Western Europe, a trend yet to be evidenced in Africa.

In Western Europe since the end of World War II, the policy emphasis has shifted significantly from a disposition to 'war' to an ever increasing commitment to the exploration and systematic utilisation of the 'peace', and cooperative potentials of international boundaries and shared borderlands.

PROSPECTS FOR TRANSFRONTIER REGIONALISM IN AFRICA

Like in Europe of the post war era, there are similar pressures in relation to Africa's local history, geography, and politics for transfrontier cooperation and wider regional integration. Transborder cooperation in Africa can be predicated on vibrant transfrontier regions which await appropriate attention and policy adjustments to stimulate them into formidable transfrontier regional organisations capable of galvanising the various fledgling sub-continental organisations and transforming them into an African regional organisation envisioned in the African Economic Treaty, initiated in 1991 on the model of the European Economic Treaty of 1957 (Bonchuk 2002: 97).

Either in Europe or Africa, the prospects for transfrontier regionalism appear irresistibly driven by certain interlocking forces: the local population, border economy, natural resources and the environment, and the widely recognised necessity to ground African regional and sub-regional integration projects on the realities of local African history and culture. The continuous operation of these factors has led to various micro-integration formations across Africa's international boundaries, each begging to be formalised and thereafter used as cornerstones for wider regional integration projects being pursued by states in the various sub-regions of the continent (Asiwaju 1996: 64).

The first and the most fundamental of these forces compelling transfrontier regionalism in Africa is the commanding presence everywhere of sequestered partitioned ethnic groups and culture areas. The continent wide-operation of this exceptionally vibrant factor has ensured a systematic and sustained contradiction and obliteration of the normal separation or barrier functions and effects of the inter-sovereignty boundaries. This effacing impact of Africa's 'transborder people' is produced by the cross-border operation of the stronger networks of cultural, socio-economic and even political interactions between borderlanders astride specific segments of every border, speaking identical indigenous languages and sharing related cultural identities such as traditional religion, memories of common ancestral origin, identical socio-economic and political institutions as well as in many instances, very close kinship ties (Bonchuk 2001: 77).

This factor has been recognised by researchers and consultants working mostly for international development and donor agencies including the World Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development. Their studies reveal the dominance of the most unofficial forms of inter-Africa business transaction vis-à-vis the recorded aspects (Maccgaffe 1991:42).

The realisation of the magnitude of cross-border trade flow and the truly regional character of its operational dynamics has led experts of West African studies to appreciate and suggest the need for a radical re-orientation of current approach to regional integration in favour of a new strategy which they have called 'Market Driven Integration.' The essence of this suggestion is that instead of continuing to be pursued on the model of the traditional international organisation, regional integration in Africa should be rooted in the alternative realities of transnational interactions so strongly manifested in crossborder trade (Asiwaju, Barkindo & Mabale 1996: 27).

The importance of this crucial factor is especially emphasised, not only by the high incidence in the use that has been made of rivers – such as Zambezi, Limpopo and the Mano; lakes such as, the Chad, Victoria and Malawi; and mountains Cameroon, Adamawa, and Kilomajaro, as boundaries, but also common place characteristic of such transnational rivers as the Nile, the Niger, the Senegal and the Orange as Africa's rivers of unity and natural choice 'Afre-gios' for integration (Wilk 1990: 36).

Another factor in cross-border pull in Africa is the irresistible force imposed by the wide array of transborder natural resources including natural habitat and eco-system entities. The potential stimulants for transborder cooperation in planning, development and joint management are also demonstrated, paradoxically, by the roles that are known to have been actually played by transborder strategic resources as irritants of international conflicts. For example, the off-shore hydrocarbon deposits in the Gulf of Guinea, have provoked a

prolonged border dispute and often trigger off conflicts and aggressive litigation between Nigeria and Cameroon.

The earlier Libya-Chad and Mali-Burkina Faso border conflicts and international litigations over stretches of shared boundaries suspected to be rich in solid minerals such as the Azour strip in the one case and the Agacher corridor on the other. Cross-border flora and fauna, critical to all important tourist industries of most Eastern and Southern African countries, have proved to be of comparative value as factors of conflict as they can also be made into those of frontier regional solidarity (UN, 1993: 31).

The fourth and final indication of prospects for transfrontier regionalism in Africa is in the evidence of an ever-increasing number of advocacies. Arguments about a reorientation of regional integration projects on the more solid foundation of local African cultures, aspired by known affinities of history and traditions of people, has been added to the advocacy of a market driven' perspective, informed by business data collections and analysis regarding Transborder business transactions and their wider regional dynamics and networks.

Between 1988 and 1992, Trans-border Cooperation Policy Consultative meetings were held in Nigeria with her numerous neighbours, as well as in Zimbabwe from 1995 to 1996 in the context of the grassroots approach to border cooperation and development. In Eastern and Southern Africa, the UN Center for Regional Development in Africa office in Nairobi, Kenya initiated similar research programmes. Deepening crises on the African continent, as in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn, West Africa (notably Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, etc.) have stimulated an ever-increasing awareness of imperative of transborder cooperation. These conflicts have produced such dramatic effects as spectacular refugee movements and cross-border spillovers of armed rebellions in adjacent states.

'UTI POSSEDETIS' OBSTACLES TO AFRICA'S ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

As earlier indicated, there is in postcolonial Africa as much potential and even pressures for transfrontier regionalism as in post-war Europe. What baffles many is, why has Africa lagged so much behind the events and developments in Europe? It has been argued that the most crucial factor has been the entrenchment of the nation-state structure and the interrelated negative features such as the unbridled assertions of territorial sovereignty or 'state-nationalism'.

There is a very interesting irony in the history of postcolonial Africa vis-à-vis the history of contemporary Europe; in that it was precisely at the same time when Europeans, in the immediate aftermath of the last and the most tragic wars which had been fostered on them by 'state nationalism' of the preceding three centuries, embarked on a systematic conversion from a nationalist to a

regionalist ideology that state-nations of Africa raised their ugly heads. Thus, while in Europe, the upward swing since 1945 had been towards the achievement of a 'trans- and supra-national, integration and the 'defunctionalising,' 'devaluating' and 'overcoming' of 'National Boundaries', 'traced by erstwhile European colonial powers' became 'utterly sacred and one of the main political consensus is to demarcate, sharpen, strengthen and harden them' (Hansen 1983: 27).

The notion of the nation-state in Europe is perceived to be an obsolete mode of social organisation and there is one felt need to 'efface' towards higher levels such as the EU and lower levels, such as local and regional communities [...] and borderland communities as miniature exemplars of the new, United Europe. In Africa, the contemporary state-nations remain firmly grounded on the doctrine and practice of territorial sovereignty and regional integration projects are pursued on the organisational model of classical international organisation. In Africa, international boundaries and borderlands are held and treated as points of discontinuity and as barriers rather than bridges or cornerstones for wider regional integration. In Europe, the emphasis is on decentralisation of territorial administration and decision-making process; in postcolonial Africa, the trend is ever-increasing centralisation and control (Asiwaju 1996: 27).

The sharp contrast in the two histories, Africa and Europe since 1945, goes beyond the question of ideology of nationalism on the one and regionalism on the other. While post-war Europe represents a conversion not only from nationalist into regionalist political ideology but also from militarism and totalitarianism into fully-fledged democracy and total commitment to the defense and preservation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, African ruling elites continue to draw inspiration from a pre-war Europe, which contemporary Europeans themselves are determined to forget.

For integration to achieve the expected results, the nation-state in Africa must be redirected to achieve a future Africa of the regions and the peoples modelled on the EU – firmly grounded on the active and systematic practice of transfrontier regionalism and nourished by region-wide compliance with the principles and practices of democratic governance. While the border communities in Europe have been liberated from oppression by the nation-state and have become the cornerstones for the realisation of community, African border communities are still being held in 'asylum' by their nation-states. Thus, similar socio-political conditions must be created and nourished if Africa is to become like contemporary Europe, which has long replaced the one that created its colonial states (Wilk 1996:235).

Judging from current European developments, African has a lot of gaps to bridge. However, the future of Africa's development must gravitate towards institutionalisation of transfrontier cooperation as an indispensable cornerstone for the realisation of durable regional integration projects. The significant re-

newal of efforts at the creation of new sub-regional organisations and a radical reconceptualisation and reorientation of the existing institutions and then, the promotion of border-specific cooperation policy initiatives especially in the Maghreb, west, eastern and Southern Africa lend credence to this.

There is for example, the upgrading of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) into a super national organisation for the region, based on the adoption of a revised ECOWAS Treaty 1993. There is also the re-orientation of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and the Arab Maghrebian Union (AMU) rooted in the practice of transfrontier cooperation especially in the co-development of border regions between members states of Morocco, Mauritania, Libya, Algeria and Tunisia (U.N., 1993: 45). Furthermore, the initiative by Nigeria vis-à-vis her numerous neighbours, which featured a series of bilateral workshops, and Transborder cooperation in the 1980s, 1990s, and the ongoing Research Projects on the Development of Border Regions in Eastern and Southern Africa initiated in 1992 by the U. N. Centre for Regional Development Africa officer in Nairobi, Kenya, attest to the priority given to transfrontier regionalism in Africa.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to sustain the modest developments and ensure their acceleration and spread, there must be a radical re-orientation of the mindset of postcolonial Africa's so called 'inheritance elite.' Furthermore, there is need for an urgent action plan on the part of policy makers in Africa and a re-dedication of support on the part of African and Africanist research communities in Africa and outside Africa.

The organisation of the African Unity having so resolved through its Charter in 1963 and the Cairo Declaration of 1964, to adopt 'Uti Possedetis' – which legitimised the inherited colonial boundaries in the interest of peace and stability must not permit itself in the twenty-first century without taking the long overdue next logical step; that of ensuring the conversion of the inherited borders from their prevailing conflictual postures as barriers into new dispositions as bridges between the member states.

In so doing, the AU must benefit from the experience of Europe, erstwhile coloniser of Africa, where border problems similar to those in postcolonial Africa are being tackled with noticeable success. Important lessons can come from the adoption of the instrument of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Authorities and Communities which took effect in 1984 and has since been ratified and adopted by an ever-increasing number of European states including those in the recently decolonised sub-regions of Central and Eastern Europe. The AU, possible through the Afri-

can Development Bank, should create an African Regional Development fund on the analogy of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and for purposes similar to the Interreg programme in Community Europe.

Furthermore, Africanist researchers must shift emphasis from the traditional statist and, therefore, predominantly conflictual perspective and re-focus on projects that explore more for peace, cooperative and regional integration potentials of African boundaries. African research institutions outside the continent, such as the imaginative border focused Programme on International Cooperation in Africa (PICA) an American programme, must collaborate actively with parallel institutions within Africa such as the Centre for African Regional and Border Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria, that focuses permanently on the factors of boundaries in regional integration in African.

The role expected of the European Community (now European Union), the erstwhile imperial and colonial powers who partitioned Africa is to make necessary amends through appropriate programmes of assistance. The international Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank lending policy, which has tended to accord attention to the nation-state territorial structure, must be blended to include support for International Regional Development Initiatives in Africa. Active support from the EU and the North American Free Trade Area would boast transfrontier regionalism in Africa. It is imperative for the EU, especially the European Economic Commission, to extend the similar funding to that extended to the development of Eastern and Central European 'Euregios' vis-à-vis – transfrontier regional development programmes to 'Afregios' in order to sustain the quantum of their transfrontier cooperation and integration of their shared borderlands.

CONCLUSION

The chapter analysed the evolution of African boundaries and the adoption of the Latin American concept of 'Uti Possedetis' or boundary maintenance. It was argued that the principle of 'Uti possedetis juris' is a negation of the desired goal of economic cooperation and integration since the concept sharpens rather than dissolves African boundaries. The need for economic integration based on the European model of Europe of the regions was highlighted. A comparison of European and African boundaries revealed that there are many similarities between them, and that there is great potential for regional integration based on 'Afregios', as evidenced in the 'Euregio' typology. In order to sustain the modest developments and ensure their acceleration and spread a radical re-orientation of the mindset of African leaders was suggested, and the need to re-orientate border studies from their perception as barriers to bridges was emphasised.

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[The UN appeared to have considered the Biafra case as a purely internal affair of Nigeria. The then UN Secretary General claimed that the UN does not and will not accept secession (*UN Monthly Chronicle*, February 1970, p. 40). The OAU also considered the Biafra case as an internal affair of Nigeria. In its resolution on the situation in Nigeria adopted in Kinshasa on 14 September 1967, the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government reiterated 'their condemnation of secession in any Member States', recognised 'the situation in Nigeria as an internal affair, the solution of which is primarily the responsibility of Nigerians themselves', and resolved 'to send a consultative mission of six Heads of State ... to the Head of the Federal Government of Nigeria to assure

him of the Assembly's desire for the territorial integrity, unity and peace of Nigeria.' Brownlie 1971: 364.]

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Territorial Dispute Case (Libya v. Chad) 6 ICJ Report, 1994.

Titiahongo v Cameroon (2007), Communication No. 1186/2003. (The HRC found Cameroun in violation of the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, the right to freedom from torture, the right to freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and in violation of the right to life in imprisoning the complainant under life-threatening conditions.)

Western Sahara Case (1975) ICJ Report, 1985.

Notes

1. Personal Interview conducted by this writer on the Ogoni Day celebration at Bori, Ogoni, 4 January 2005.
2. Interview with Ken Saro-Wiwa: 'We will defend our oil with our Blood' in *Tell Magazine* (Nigeria), 8 February 1993.
3. See: On the boycott of South Africa by Julius Nyerere at: <http://www.africasource.com/voi/nyerere.htm>, [Accessed 19 July 2006].
4. See: Ken Saro-Wiwa's interview entitled 'They are killing my people' in *The News Magazine* (Nigeria) 17 May 1993.
5. Howell, J., 1973. 'Politics in the Southern Sudan.' *African Affairs*, 72(287), pp. 163–78.
6. www.dibussi.com.
7. In fact, in Africa there are, quite apart from Eritrea, seven other separation cases. Zanzibar separated from Muscat in 1856. Senegal seceded from the Mali Federation in August 1960. In July 1962 Ruanda-Urundi, hitherto a Belgian-administered trust territory, agreed to achieve independence as the two separate states of Rwanda and Burundi. Nyasaland (Malawi) broke away from the Central African Federation in 1963. The independence of the Republic of Comoros was proclaimed on 6 July 1975 and the new state was recognised by the OAU and the UN and admitted to membership of both organisations. Seven months later, on 8 February 1976 France staged a 'referendum' in the Island of Mayotte, an integral part of the Republic of Comoros, and declared that the people of the island had voted to secede from Comoros and to remain forever under the sovereignty of France. Mayotte is considered by France as part of its territory. Cape Verde in 1980 left the loose Guinea-Bissau/Cape Verde federation. The Gambia separated from the Senegambia Confederation in 1989.
8. Smith, D.J. 2004. 'Burials and belonging in Nigeria: Rural-Urban Relations and Social Inequality in a Contemporary African Ritual.' *American Anthropologist*, 106(3), pp. 45–67.
9. The two names were derived from slogans that Zanla used during the war. They often demanded maize porridge and chicken from the villagers, and their slogans often began with the phrase, 'down with'.
10. Loosely translated, 'ezweni' means in the country. Matabeleland is the only entity that these migrants associate with, and when they 'cry the beloved country', that country does not include the wider Zimbabwe.
11. Translated to mean, 'Did you fail to get one of your kind in the east of Zimbabwe for you to insult us. You think that we came all the way to give love to Shonas in Johannesburg.
12. Translated to mean, 'Is this one lost? He does not know the websites of his kind?'

13. See Masunungure's deployment of this concept in his analysis of the post-2000 crisis.
14. Cited in Okpeh Jr 2007.
15. The text is based on several earlier published analyses (Melber 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008, 2009) and draws in particular on a paper presented at a Faculty of Humanities Seminar at the University of Pretoria in August 2010 (Melber 2011).
16. Yap, K. P. 2001. Uprooting the Weeds: Power, Ethnicity and Violence in the Matabeleland. Conflict 1980 to 1987. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam.
17. Braathen, E. and Orre, A., 2001. 'Can a Patrimonial Democracy Survive? The Case of Mozambique.' *Forum for Development Studies*, 2, pp. 199–239.
18. Wunsch J.S. and Olowu, D. 1990. *The Failure of the Centralised State*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Bondage of Boundaries and Identity Politics in Postcolonial Africa

The 'Northern Problem' and Ethno-Futures

What has confounded African efforts to create cohesive, prosperous and just states in postcolonial Africa? What has been the long-term impact of the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 on African unity and African statehood? Why is postcolonial Africa haunted by various ethno-national conflicts? Is secession and irredentism the solution? Can we talk of ethno-futures for Africa? These are the kinds of fundamental questions that this important book addresses.

Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Brilliant Mhlanga's book introduces the metaphor of the 'northern problem' to dramatise the fact that there is no major African postcolonial state that does not enclose within its borders a disgruntled minority that is complaining of marginalization, domination and suppression. The irony is that in 1963 at the formation of the OAU, postcolonial African leaders embraced the boundaries arbitrarily drawn by European colonialists and institutionalised the principle of inviolability of 'bondage of boundaries' thereby contributing to the problem of ethno-national conflicts.

The successful struggle for independence of the Eritrean people and the secession of South Sudan in 2011 have encouraged other dominated and marginalised groups throughout Africa to view secession as an option. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mhlanga successfully assembled competent African scholars to deal exhaustively with various empirical cases of ethno-national conflicts throughout the African continent as well as engaging with such pertinent issues as Pan-Africanism as a panacea to these problems. This important book delves deeper into complex issues of space, languages, conflict, security, nation-building, war on terror, secession, migration, citizenship, militias, liberation, violence and Pan-Africanism.

